Ex Lib. Dun: Fell:

NON ULTRA:

OR, A

LETTER

TO A

Learned *CARTESIAN*;

Settling the

RULE *of* TRUTH,

AND

FIRST PRINCIPLES,

Upon their

DEEPEST GROUNDS.

By *J. S.*

LONDON,
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SIMON VERA:

OR A

PETITION

FOR A

General CONVERSATION,

AND

FIRST PRINCIPLES,

TOWARDS

THE FIRST CREATION.

BY A

To the Much Honoured

Sir EDWARD SOUTHCOT,

Knight and Baronet.

SIR,

'TIS *ſo* Unuſual *a* Complement, *to make a Perſon of your Quality a* Judge *in a Philoſophical Controverſie, that it will be* Admir'd *at by thoſe who do not know you; and, I fear, ſcarce Accepted by your ſelf. Such Studies do ſo ſeldom colour with the Profeſſion of a Gentleman, that He muſt be much* rais'd *above the* Common, *who can merit the Eſteem of being fit for ſuch an Umpirage. To be held, not only a* Lover *of Learning, but a* Diſcerner *too in that* Higheſt *Sort of Knowledge, is ſuch a* Starry Embelliſhment *to a Noble Extraction, and ſets ſuch a* Deep Stamp *of Honour upon it, that it gives a* Double Tincture *of Excellency to ſuch Illuſtrious Perſons, and* ranks *them in the* Firſt

File *of* Heroes. *In the Time of* Auguſtus, *when the* Roman *Learning was in its* Zenith, *ſuch Famous Worthies might have been eaſily met with; but they are ſo Rare* now-a-days, *that they ſeem* Uncouth, *and look like* Monſters: *And ſuch, indeed, they are, in* Scaliger's *Phraſe; that is,* Monſters of Perfection. *Great Men do generally,* now, *ſo* undervalue *Learning, and 'tis ſo* deſpicably-Little *in their Eye, as if they took a* View *of it at the* Wrong *End of the* Proſpective. *The Noble Sir* Kenelm Digby, *the Honourable Mr.* Boyle, *and ſome few others, have reſcu'd the* Univerſality *of their* Peers *from this Imputation: But, now that they have left us,* ſuch *Perſonages are ſo very* thin-ſown, *that, for any thing we ſee, there are but Few left, beſides your ſelf, who give us any Proſpect of keeping alive a* Succeſſion *of Men, endow'd with that* Renowned Character.

Yet,

Tet, Ignorance *and* Folly *are ſuch* Ignoble *Blemiſhes, that* KNOWLEDGE, in Common, *does ſtill uphold it ſelf, with the Generality of Mankind, in a* Fair Eſteem: *But, this Thing, call'd* [PHILOSOPHY,] *looks like ſuch a* Bug-bear *to moſt of our Modern Great Ones, that the very* Name *and* Sound *of it puts them in a Marvellous* Fright; *whence, 'tis no wonder Men* do not love, *or eſteem* Amiable, *what they* fear, *and look upon as* Hideous. *Whereas, indeed, the Study of* Philoſophy *is no more but the* Improvement *of our* Reaſon, *(by which we are* Men,) *in* Reading, *and (to a fair Degree)* Underſtanding *the Book of the World; or, in Knowing thoſe Things, with which, whether we will or no, we* muſt *Converſe, and be Concern'd* daily. *Certainly, their Palate is much* out of Taſte, *who cannot* reliſh *a* Benefit *ſo* Natural *to our* Soul; *but think it below*

the Station of a Gentleman, to regard *it. I could wiſh ſuch Men would pleaſe to reflect upon* what *kind of Objects their Thoughts and Affections are* employ'd, *while they* neglect *This. I believe it would* ſhame *their* Choice, *if they duly conſider'd what* Empty Toys *they purſu'd, and* prefer'd *before this* Solid *and* Subſtantial *Good. PHILOSOPHY, truly ſuch, and rightly underſtood, is far from being ſuch a* Frightful Thing *as their Imagination paints it; being only* Plain, *Natural Reaſon,* Poliſh'd, Better'd *and* Elevated *by* Art *and* Reflexion: *So that they who check at the Knowledge of* Philoſophy, *ought, with much better Reaſon, find fault with the Teaching Perſons of Quality to* Sing, Dance *or* Play on the Lute: *Unleſs they think it very* Prudent, *and* Expedient, *to give our* Voice, Feet *and* Fingers *the beſt Advantages we can, to perform their Actions* artificially,

cially, *and* exactly; *but, that 'tis a very* Needless Folly *to perfect the* Knowing *Power of our* Soul; *and wondrous* Wise, *to let it still* doze *on sluggishly; in its Home-spun* Native Rudeness, *and lie wholly* Uncultivated. *Nay, such Gentlemen would be much offended their Houses should not be* clean Swept, *and* Garnish'd; *yet, they are not, in the least, concern'd, that* Cobwebs *should hang in the Windows of their* Intellect, *and* Dusty Ignorance *dim and* bleat *the* Sight *of the Noble Inhabitant.*

But, where is this Philosophy all this while? Or, Is there, indeed, any such Thing in Nature? Whatever Glorious Attributes some have given it, they all Agree in this, that it is the Knowledge of Truth. *If so, then, as* Truth *can be but* One, *so it should follow, that* neither *can there be more than* One Philosophy *which is the* True One; *and, that* all others *are but meer*

Pretended; *and, consequently, in reality,* Fabulous, *and* Erroneous. *Where, then, shall we certainly find this* One, *or* only True *Philosophy? Multitudes of Sects did, of old,* set up *to drive the* Trade *and Profession of Philosophizing: But, they all* Breke, *and* shut up Shop, *having but a very few* Chance-Customers; *except that Great Man, (whom St.* Hierome *calls,* Ingenii Humani Finis,) ARISTOTLE. *He, I say, alone, has got* Quiet Possession *of the Schools, for a long time; and, has now strengthen'd his Title, by an* Immemorial Prescription: *Nor did any Pretender of Note put in his Claim against him, till, in our Days, the admirably-Ingenious* CARTESIUS *declared himself his* Competitor. *Till then,* Aristotle *being drawn into different Senses, by his Many-minded Commentators amongst the Modern School-men, those Men who were of Sharp Wits, and*

hated

hated jurare in verba--- *were in danger to turn* Scepticks; *and began to think that Truth was either* flown to Heaven *in* Aſtræa's *Coach*; *or*, (*as ſome Antients thought,*) *was* in puteo defoſſa; *or elſe, if ſhe were* above-ground, *that ſhe was ſequeſter'd in ſome Terreſtrial* Paradiſe; *ſo that none could get Knowledge of her* Habitation, *or* come at her. *In this juncture, to reſcue the Flower of Mankind from falling into perfect Scepticiſm, and to encourage them ſtill to hope for Truth in Philoſophy, there aroſe, very opportunely, thoſe Great Men,* Thomas Albius, *Sir* Kenelm Digby, *and* Carteſius; *who were, all of them, in a manner Contemporary: All of them promis'd* Science, *which kept up thoſe Men's drooping Spirits from* Deſpair of Truth. *The former Two of theſe, in many of their main Principles, declar'd themſelves* Ariſtotelians; *as alſo did thoſe who follow'd their Philoſophy: Whereas,* Carteſius

tesius *ravell'd* all *the Schemes hither-to woven by* others, *moulded* all *the World in a* New Frame; *and set up for his* Single Self, *without any* Co-partner. *By which you see, Sir, that your Task, which seem'd at first so Vast, and Endless, is reduc'd, and confin'd to this* One Enquiry; viz. *to determin (in your* own Thoughts *at least, whether you think fit to* pronounce Sentence, *or no) which Party,* viz. *these Followers of* Aristotle, *or of* Cartesius, *are* True Philosophers. *On which side soever the Lot falls, it follows of course, that, since they contradict one another, the* Other, *let them Talk and Write as long as they will, are, in reality,* None.

Still you will complain, that even This *is* beyond *the Extent of your Narrow Province, and* exceeds *the* Purlew *of your Reading, and Thinking too. But I dare assure you, Sir, that this present Debate is of that nature, that it requires no more to*

Decide

Decide it, than a Fair Stock of Clear and Penetrative Natural Reaſon; *in which your* Diſcerning Genius (*beſides what* Acquiſition *may have added to it*) *is well known to be* Abounding, *and no way* Deficient. *To perform this, there needs no* Sedulous *and* Tedious *Turning over all the* Books *writ by both Parties, or Scanning the* Force *of their* Arguments. *Providence would be wanting to Mankind, were there* no other *Way than* this *left us, to know where* Truth *is to be* found: *Nor would Man's Life be* long enough *for ſuch an* Endleſs *Task. I know not what* Untoward Ways *Men, who love* much Talk, *have fram'd to themſelves, and introduced into the World: But, certainly, the* GOD *of* Truth, *who envies not to Mankind his Beſt Natural Perfection,* Exact Knowledge, *or* True Science, *has furniſh'd us with a* more Compendious, *and* more Sure Method, *if we will but follow it: Which*

is

is, to examin which *Party*, what *Book*, what *Discourse has* Right *PRINCIPLES*; *and, which* not: *If two Mathematicians* follow *their* Principles, *and yet* differ *in their* Conclusions, *we may be sure the Pretended Principles of one of them are* no *Principles* at all: *And the* same, *for the same reason, holds in* all other *Sciences. But, how shall we know who has True, or* Right Principles? *Most easily, by Examining the FIRST PRINCIPLES either Side pretends to. For, if the* First Principles *may be Fallacious, and, consequently,* None; *then the* Second Principles, *which* depend *on the* First, *can be* none *neither*; *and, so, they will be unavoidably convinc'd to have* no Kind of Principles at all. *Nor is it possible for any Man to be Ignorant, whether the* First Principles, *or* First Truths, *which are to be the RULE of knowing* all other Truths, *be* truly such; *because* These *must be* Self-evident,

most

most Firmly Grounded, Unmistakable, *and* necessarily Assented to, *by* All Mankind; *as is demonstrated in the Following Treatise; and, indeed, is Evident by* Common Reason. *Again, If either Side would pass upon us* Gratuitous, *or* Unprov'd Suppositions, *for* Principles; *or decline the Way of* Connexion *of our Simple Apprehensions, in which all* Truth *formally consists; and, without which, all Discourses must be necessarily* Incoherent: *Lastly, If the RULE* of Knowing Truth *which One Party assigns, be such, that even Learned Men may be* Mistaken, *and* Deceiv'd, *while they think they* follow it; *in all these Cases, I say, 'tis* Inconteslably Evident, *that that Party are* no Philsophers; *nor can know* any thing at all, *if* Nature *be not Kinder to them, than their own* Unprincipl'd *Doctrine.*

You see, Sir, by this time, that a Gentleman, *endow'd with a* far less *Perfection of Understanding than your*

self

ſelf is Maſter of, may, by theſe Teſts, determin, who are *True Philoſophers, who* not: *As alſo, how all* Controverſies *in Philoſophy may be eaſily* Decided; *how all Occaſions of Wrangling about* particular *Tenets, may be avoided; and, laſtly, how the* Fierceſt Oppoſers, *if they really ſeek after* Truth, *may be* Reconcil'd, *and* Satisfy'd.

'Tis the Buſineſs of this following Paper, to let you into the Certain Knowledge, what Kind of Propoſitions are the **First Principles**, *and the* **Rule** of Knowing all Truth *whatever. The* First Step *we take into our* Inmoſt *Thoughts, we meet with and diſcover theſe* Primary Truths; *whoſe* Self-Evidence *is the* Earlieſt Light *that* dawns *to our Soul, as ſoon as ever her* Power *of Knowing* awakens *into* Action. *'Tis a Subject, tho'* moſt *Neceſſary, and of the* higheſt *Influence, yet* neglected *by Writers hitherto. Two or three have, indeed,* ſpoken *of it; but, none I know of, has*

handl'd

handl'd it profeſſedly, *and* at large. *Tho' it be* Dry, *and requires* Chawing *ere it becomes* Nutritive; *yet, I dare preſume, it is* Solid, *and not at all* Windy. *Even,* Seeds, *when firſt planted, are* Dry; *which, yet, hinders them not from yielding a* Large Increaſe *afterwards: The Firſt Principles are the* Seeds *of all* Truths; *which, by how much their* Roots *are laid* Deeper, *ſo much* Higher *they Rear and Extend their* Branches. *The Preſent I offer you, is* Small; *but the Little it contains, (as far as concerns this Subject,) is wrought entirely out of* Natural *and* Reflected Reaſon, *without being beholding at all to the Diſhonourable Task of* Tranſcribing; *as ſome Pieces, I could name, are. I dare undertake, that the Reaſons produc'd here, are ſo* firmly Grounded, *that they can fear no Oppoſition but* Drollery, *the laſt Effort of* Nonpluſt Reaſon. *You will not expect* Fine Language, *in a Matter that cannot*

bear

bear it. Self-Evidence *is ſo* bright-ly Luminous, *that nothing can make it* more Gloſſy: *Nor is all the* Elo-quence *in the World able to do theſe* Firſt Truths *any Service at all: All Attempts to* burniſh *or* varniſh *them, do, inſtead of doing this,* dawb *and* hide *them; as* Painting *does a* Per-fect Beauty. *The Sum is; The whole Controverſie, now agitated, is this; Whether of theſe two Philoſophies a-boveſaid is built on* more Evident Principles; *or, has a* more *Self-evi-dent, and Unmiſtakable* RULE *of* Knowing: *And, your* Steady, *and* Equally-poiz'd *Judgment, is requeſt-ed to* hold the Scales. *What the* Tri-fle *I here ſend you,* wants *in* Worth, *is, I am ſure, abundantly* ſupply'd *by the* ſincere Reſpects, *which are, at the ſame time, preſented you by,*

Much Honoured SIR,

Your ever Devoted, and
Very Humble Servant,

J. S.

Honoured SIR,

1. I Give you many Thanks for your kind Viſit. Had you known how welcome it was, I am confident you would have accepted my kind Invitation, and have gratify'd my Requeſt that you would repeat it often. But your exceeding Modeſty and Civility, did, it ſeems, fear that might be a *Trouble*, which, I do heartily aſſure you, was eſteem'd by me as a high *Favour*. Of which I thought I could give you no better Teſtimony, than by letting you ſee that I am not willing that ſmall Scantling of your Converſation you then allow'd me, ſhould be loſt. Wherefore, I thought it not amiſs to give you a Rehearſal of it, as far as my Memory reaches at ſuch a Diſtance; and withal, my Sentiments of the ſeveral Particulars then touch'd upon; what my Firſt Thoughts of them

were *then*, and my Second Thoughts *ſince*: Not debarring my ſelf the Liberty of adding ſome farther Reflexions that occurr'd to me, while I was writing this Paper; becauſe the Treating of *many* Things *confuſedly*, ere any *one* was concluded, made the Tenour of our Conference *Uneven*, and *Shatter'd*. For, in Diſcourſing of Principles, a *Slow* Pace is the *Sureſt*; and, when *Wit* is too *Nimble*, it hazards to *lame Reaſon* and *Judgment*, to *keep pace* with it.

2. I muſt confeſs, Dear Sir, That when I heard you diſcourſe, you did it ſo ingeniouſly in the *Carteſian* Way of Wit, which conſiſts in *Explicating* and *Doubting*, and ſeems to exclude *Proving*, that I did not ſee how the Great *Carteſius* himſelf could have defended his Doctrine better: For, he could not have *Doubted* more ſcrupulouſly than you did; nor, I think, have *Explicated* himſelf more ingeniouſly. You *guarded* his Doctrine ſo warily, that it was ſcarce poſſible to *attack* it. Tho', that I may not flatter you, I cannot ſay you did this by the *Evidence* of any Propoſition you

Advanc'd

Advanc'd, but by your *Ready Exceptions* againſt any thing that Art or Nature could *oppoſe*; at leaſt, taking them as manag'd by one no better skill'd than I am. Your Cauſe ſeem'd to me, as if it had been ſecur'd in ſome Caſtle; made Impregnable, not by means of the *Ordinary* Methods of Fortification, us'd in *Lawful* War; but, (which is againſt the *Old Laws* of Arms,) by a kind of *Enchantment*. Your Bulwarks, Entrenchments and Redoubts lay ſo cunningly *hid* in your Way of *Ideas*, that they were altogether *Inviſible*; ſo that the moſt quick-ſighted Engineer living could not *diſcern* them, or take any *ſure Aim* at them: Much leſs ſuch a Dull Eye as mine; who, tho' I bend my Sight as ſtrongly and ſteadily as I am able, yet I cannot, for my Heart, ſee what kind of Things thoſe *Spiritual Ideas* are. And, which leaves me in a helpleſs Condition as to that Particular, ſuch very Ingenious *Carteſians* as Mr. *Le Grand*, who, having por'd ſo long upon them, ſhould be beſt acquainted with them, and therefore beſt qualified to inform me *what they are*, gives me no Account

of them; unleſs we can think there may be ſuch Things as are made up of *Contradictions*, and altogether *Chimerical*. As you may ſee in the 2d *Examen* of my *Ideæ Carteſianæ Expenſæ*, §§. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

3. Now, Sir, This looks like a kind of *Roſycrucianiſm* in Philoſophy, to build all your Doctrine on *Ideas*, and yet keep the *Secret* among your ſelves, and *conceal* from us *what* thoſe ſame Ideas *are*. Indeed, our Doctrine, which makes our *Notions*, Conceptions, or Simple Apprehenſions, to be *the very Things objectively in our Underſtanding*, ſeems very Abſtruſe to thoſe who guide themſelves by *Fancy*, and not by *Connexion of Terms*; in regard it depends on the Manner of Operating proper to *Spiritual Natures*; which is above our Common Speculation concerning *Natural* Subjects, and is only reachable by thoſe who are well vers'd in *Metaphyſicks*: Yet, notwithſtanding, I tell you plainly (*Preliminary 2d.*) *what* theſe Notions *are*: I explicate them fully, ſo that none can doubt what I mean by them: Nay, more; I bring there many (at leaſt pretended) *Demon-*

Demonstrations, to *prove* they *must* be such; none of which Mr. *Le Grand* (if he do, indeed, differ from me in that Point) has thought fit to solve. This being so, you would very much oblige me, if you would help me to the sight of any *Cartesian* Author, who has so clearly and candidly given us his Thoughts concerning your *Ideas*; who has fully *explain'd* their Nature, *defin'd* them, and attempted to *demonstrate* they *must be such*. Which if it be not done, all other Sorts of Philosophers in the World have reason to complain that they are very hardly dealt with. For your Method calls into Doubt, in a manner, *all* the Ways of Knowing held by Mankind, till *Cartesius*'s Time: And you would have us renounce all our former Judgments, and accept nothing for Certain, but what appears to us by *your Way* of IDEAS; and yet you will not give us a Clear and Distinct Knowledge, *what your Ideas are*, nor *demonstrate* them to be *such* as you would have us believe them to be: Without which, perhaps there are no such Things as those *Ideas* of yours; nor, consequently, is your

Way of Philoſophy, building all our Science upon ſuch *Ideas*, any Way *at all*. But, to return to our Conference.

4. Foreſeeing I ſhould not be able to give Satisfaction to your Acute Wit, without beginning from the very Bottom-Ground of all Truth, (to do which my own Genius alſo inclin'd me,) I alledg'd, That it was manifeſt we could neither ſpeak *True* nor *Falſe*, without *Affirming*, or *Denying*, (which we uſe to call *Formal Truth*;) and therefore, that Truth was no where to be found, but in ſuch Speeches as were *Affirmative*, or *Negative*: Which kind of Speeches Logicians call *Propoſitions*. Alſo, That all *Truth*, if Affirmatively expreſs'd, conſiſts in the *Connexion* of the two main Parts of a Propoſition; which Logicians call, its *Terms*, or *Extremes*; and that, for the ſame reaſon, if thoſe *Terms* were *Unconnected*, the Propoſition was *Falſe*. I flatter'd my ſelf, you would become Convinc'd *thus far*; the *Ground* I built on being *Unavoidable*, my *Deductions* thence *Immediate*, and the *Conſequence* Clear and *Undeniable*. But you were

too

too hard for me in your *Doubting* Way: For, you gave ſome ſmall Stop to my Proceeding, by your Diſ-like of the Word [*Propoſition*] as ſavouring of the Way of the Schools. This a little ſurpriz'd me: For, I conceiv'd, that ſince *Words* were only intended to ſignifie our *Meanings*, there could be no Reaſon why the *Word* ſhould diſlike any, ſo it was declar'd what was *meant* by it; which, the *Common Uſage* of it by Philoſophers, for ſo many Centuries, had, I thought, ſufficiently manifeſted, and warranted. This gave me Occaſion to explain my ſelf; and to declare, that I meant no more by the Word [*Propoſition*,] but *A Speech that Affirms, or Denies.* I added, That therefore, ſuch Speeches, if *Affirmative*, (and the ſame, *mutatis mutandis*, is to be ſaid of *Negative* ones,) muſt conſiſt of ſomething *that is Affirm'd*, ſomething *of which, is Affirm'd*, and ſome Word *which Affirms* or expreſſes the *Affirmation.* Which three Parts of a Propoſition, Logicians agree to call *Predicate*, *Subject*, and *Copula.* Theſe plaineſt First Rudiments I was forc'd to begin with;

not out of any Apprehenſion you did not know them; but, out of my Deſire you would admit the *Words*, after ſuch an Explanation of them; fearing, otherwiſe, I ſhould want Language to diſcourſe with you, in a Subject of this nature.

5. What follow'd immediately, I do not certainly remember; but I think it was, That you excepted againſt that whole *Artificial* Way of Diſcourſing; and made account there was a *more Compendious Method*, or *Shorter Cut* to Science: Which, I conceive, was, by Contemplating your *Ideas*; by which you hop'd to arrive at Truth, by the *Clear* and *Diſtinct* Appearance of it to your Mind. To defend our Method, I alledg'd, That it was the *Way of Nature*, tho' perfected by *Art*; as all our other Natural Faculties and Operations are. That all *Art*, if it be Solid, and not *Fantaſtick*, is nothing but a *Deeper* Inſpection into Plain, Honeſt *Nature*, made by the Reflexion of our Mind. That ſuch Mental Speeches and Propoſitions, and each Part of them, (as was ſhewn lately,) were in the Under-

derſtandings of all Mankind, when they do *conceive*, or intend to *ſpeak* any Truth, or Falſhood. That all the Diſcourſes about a Syllogiſm, made by True Logick, (which is nothing but Exact Reflexion upon what paſſes in every Man's Mind, *naturally*,) is nothing but the *Diſſecting* an Evident or Concluſive Diſcourſe, made by our *Natural* Faculty of *Reaſoning*, into all its Parts; the *Placing* thoſe Parts beſt, in order to *Clearneſs*; and the Shewing thoſe *Nerves* and *Wires*, (the Firſt Principles of our Underſtanding,) which are, as it were, the Main *Springs* of our *Reaſon*, and give Strength and Vigour to ſuch a Diſcourſe. And the ſame may be ſaid of a Propoſition, both as to its Parts, and the *Connexion* or *Identity* of its two Terms, (the Subject, and Predicate,) in which conſiſts its *Truth*: All which, I hope, I have ſhewn very particularly, in the Second and Third Books of my METHOD *to* SCIENCE. Moreover, Becauſe I ſaw, your Prejudice againſt our Way was taken from the Inſignificant *Jargon* of ſome of our School-men, I take leave to add, that,

let

let others talk as ſuperficially of thoſe Matters as they pleaſe, and diſparage the true *Way* of *Art*, by miſ-managing it, and making it look Phantaſtick; yet I am not conſcious to my ſelf, that I have any thing in my Method, but what is entirely built on the *Nature of the Thing* in hand; I mean, *Notions*, *Propoſitions*, and *Rational Diſcourſes*, found in the Minds of *all Mankind*: Which Way of Building on the *Nature* of the *Subject* of which we are ſpeaking, is the *only Ground* that can give *Solidity* to *any* Diſcourſe: At leaſt, I am ſure, that, if I have any Argument there, which has any *other* Foundation, I ſhall renounce it, as ſwerving from my *Method*, and my *Intention*: And I do candidly here declare, that I am oblig'd, either to bring a *more Solid* Proof for that Point, or I ought not to expect it ſhould be well receiv'd by any Man of Learning. Which being ſo, I have that good Opinion of your Equity, that you will not therefore diſcard a Way which is *thus* willing to approve it ſelf to be *Solid*, and to ſubſiſt by Arguments built on the Firm Ground of *the Nature of the Thing*,

Thing, becauſe ſome ſlight Underſtanders of it have us'd it *triflingly*. Nor would you think it reaſonable, that the *Carteſian* Hypotheſis ſhould be quite rejected, upon no other Reaſon, but becauſe you think ſome late Writers have not done it the Right they ought.

6. In order to your *Clear and Diſtinct Perception*, which you therefore judg'd to be the **Rule** or *Teſt* of all Truth, becauſe we cannot but *Aſſent* to that, *as True*, which we *Clearly and Diſtinctly ſee* to be ſo, I make theſe Preliminary Remarks. 1. That this is the main Hinge of all the *Carteſian* Hypotheſis, which perſuades them to place the *Ground of Truth* within their *own Minds*, and its *Productions*; and not in the *Things themſelves*. 2. That this is the moſt Ingenious and Plauſible Conception, which the Great Wit of *Carteſius* ever advanc'd; and therefore it moſt deſerves Clearing: Which is, indeed, one main Reaſon why I ſtrain'd Courteſie a little, in publiſhing this Paper. 3. That the Plauſibility of it lies chiefly in this, That every Man muſt grant the *Truth* of that Propoſition, as

it lies: For, Who can deny, but that what I *ſee* to *be True*, *is True*? This being full as Evident, as that I *cannot ſee* what *is not*. This, then, is a plain Truth, and might deſerve the Name of a *Subordinate Rule*; were it *Certain*, or *prov'd* firſt, that we could not poſſibly be *Miſtaken* in thinking we *have* a *Clear* and *Diſtinct* Perception of a Thing, when we have it *not*. Mr. *Le Grand* confeſſes, this may happen when the Will is Byaſs'd, or Men are Unskilful; (and how frequent is that?) And we ſhall give many Inſtances afterwards, how we are deceiv'd in *many other* Occaſions. 4. That this *Clear* and *Diſtinct* Perception, the *Carteſians* ſo much ſpeak of, and value themſelves upon, tho' the *Expreſſion* be *New*, is no more in reality, but *Perfect Evidence of an Object*: For, the ſeeing any Object *Clearly*, is the ſeeing it *Evidently*; nor can we ſee *It* evidently, if *that* Object, or *It*, be *Confounded* with *others*, and not ſeen to be *Diſtinct* from them. Wherefore, this Phraſe, of *Clear* and *Diſtinct Perception* is a meer *Amuzement*; and, being *New*, makes the Readers apt to conceit that it is a lately

lately-found-out Diſcovery of ſome unheard of *Thing*, or ſome *New Method*, of which *all former* Philoſophers were hitherto ignorant; whereas, 'tis the ſelf-ſame with *Perfect Evidence of ſome Particular Object*; which all the Learned Part of Mankind have *ever us'd*, before *Carteſius* was born; nay, have allow'd, and held alſo, That no Man could *refrain from Aſſenting* that the Thing, or Mental Propoſition, is *True*, when with Perfect Evidence It is *ſeen to be ſo*. Wherefore, this laſt Point will not, I hope, break Squares between the *Carteſians* and me; for, thus far we agree in our *Meanings*; however, I except againſt the Novelty of the *Expreſſion*, which would ſeem to intimate ſomething Extraordinary in the Method you pretend to have firſt found out, and introduced; and which, by your Carriage, you ſeem to *appropriate* to your ſelves, as ſingularly *yours*. 5. Theſe Things being ſo, it follows, that the *Firſt Rule* of our Knowledge of all Truths whatever muſt be *Common* to *all* Knowing Natures in the World: It muſt alſo be the moſt Evident that can be, or *Self-evident*;

evident; ſo that none can *diſagree*, *diſſent*, or *be Deceiv'd* in it, but *muſt See* and *Aſſent* to it, in deſpite of any Weakneſs of the Underſtanding, or any Byaſs or Obliquity of the *Will*; as we ſhall ſee hereafter *our* Rule *is*, and *muſt be*. And the Reaſon is, becauſe this Rule being that, by means of which, a Creature made for Knowledge is *capable* of knowing *any thing*; it follows, that, if it lay in any Man's power to be *Ignorant* of this Rule, or to *diſſent* from it, or be *deceiv'd* in it, it would be in his power, not meerly to *pervert*, but utterly to *deſtroy* and *unmake* the Nature given him by God; and, of *Cognoſcitive* or *Capable of Knowledge*, make it *Uncognoſcitive* or *Incapable* of Knowing any thing; which, the Natures of Things being *fix'd* by God's Wiſdom, to *be what they are*, 'tis as impoſſible for any Man to do, as it is for him to put off his own Individuality, and not *be the ſame Perſon he is*.

7. Theſe Notes premis'd, I come cloſer to examine your *Rule of Truth*. You ſay, If you *Clearly* and *Diſtinctly ſee* that a Thing is *True*, you do thence

certain

certainly know it to *be so*. I allow the Conditional Propoſition; for, 'tis Impoſſible to *ſee* that which is *not to be ſeen*; or to *know* that to be *True*, which is *not-True*. The only Queſtion, then, is, Whether this be a **Rule** *of Truth*; Mr. *Le Grand* very rationally granting, *p.* 92. there goes more to conſtitute a *Rule of Truth*, than to be *True*? In order to the Clearing of which, I ask: Was it True *before* you ſaw Clearly and Diſtinctly it *was True*? Or, Did it *become* True by your *ſeeing* it (as you phraſe it) Clearly and Diſtinctly *to be True*? If it *were* True *before* you thus *ſaw* it to be True; then, 'tis unavoidable, there was *Another* Rule, or Reaſon, for that Truth which *anteceded* your *Seeing* it to be ſuch; and therefore, your Clear and Diſtinct Perception could not be the *Rule* of Knowing *that* Truth, being *Subſequent* to it. And, if you ſay, it *became* True by your *Seeing* it Clearly and Diſtinctly, then it was *not* True *before*; and then, you ſaw that to *be* True, which *was not* True; that is, you ſaw it to be *otherwiſe*, than, in Effect and Reality, it was. And, conſequently,

ſequently, that pretended Sight or Perception is ſo far from being *A Rule of Truth*, that it is a palpable *Errour* and *Miſtake*; and therefore, all the Judgments iſſuing from it muſt be *Falſe*. Which, inſtead of Conſtituting it *A Rule of Truth*, would make it, indeed, *A Rule of Falſhood*.

8. To make this yet plainer, pleaſe to reflect, that this Clear and Diſtinct Perception is ſuch an *Act* of your Underſtanding; and that all *Acts* have their *being ſuch*, from the *Object* of thoſe Acts. For, the Faculty or *Power* of Underſtanding was, *of it ſelf*, Indifferent and *Indetermin'd* to All and Every *Particular Act*: And, ſince nothing that is *Indetermin'd*, nor any Act *in Common*, can *Be*; it follows, that the *Being*, and being *ſuch*, of each *Act*, depends *formally* on the *Object*; and is *ſuch in particular*, as that Object, which *informs* the Power, is. Wherefore, when you ſee a Thing to be *True*, that which you ſaw *thus* Clearly and Diſtinctly *True*, muſt have been *thus* True *before* you ſaw it to *be ſo*. Whence, we ask, What was that which made the Object you *perceiv'd-to-be-true*, to

be

be True? Or, What was the Rule of Truth to that Object that *was* True, ere you ſaw it to *be ſuch*? Muſt not the Object *be ſuch*, ere you can *know* it *to be ſuch*? Or Clearly and Diſtinctly *Perceptible to be ſuch*, before you can Clearly and Diſtinctly *Perceive it to be ſuch*? If not, then you muſt ſay, you can *know* what is *not to be known*, or Clearly and Diſtinctly *perceive* what is not Clearly and Diſtinctly *to be perceiv'd*: Which is a perfect Contradiction.

9. For Inſtance; Since Truth is no where to be found, but in ſuch Speeches as *Affirm*, or *Deny*, that is, in *Propoſitions*; let us put ſome Propoſition which you thus Clearly and Diſtinctly *perceive to be True*, and therefore (as was lately demonſtrated) muſt have *been* True *before* you *ſaw* it to *be ſo*. Does it not clearly follow, that, Either *that* Truth muſt have been *made Evident* by *Another*, and that again by *Another*, and ſo *in infinitum*; (by which means, *nothing at all* could ever be ſeen to be *True*;) or elſe there muſt have been ſome *Firſt* kind of Truths, whoſe Noon-day Evidence imparts

imparts Evidence to *others*, and is it ſelf *Viſible*, or (if you pleaſe) Clearly and Diſtinctly Perceptible to *all Mankind*; and *forces* them, at firſt ſight, to *Aſſent* to its Verity? Now, if ſome ſuch *Firſt* kind of Truths can be found, which, by their *Abſolute Self-Evidence*, do, as Objects of our Underſtanding Power, neceſſarily determin the Underſtandings of *all Mankind*, to *Aſſent*; and do withall *influence* All our *other Truths*, and our *Knowledge* of them; then (our *Act of Perception* being clearly *Excluded* from being the *Rule of Truth*) theſe *Firſt Truths* have all the Requiſites that can be imagin'd for a *Ratio cognoſcendi Veritatem*, or a *Rule of Truth*; ſince they ſelf-evidently manifeſt to us their *own* Truth; and *by it*, give us Light to know *all others*. Let us purſue then the Queſt of theſe *Firſt Truths*. Our Diſcourſe, becauſe it concerns and antecedes *all other* Knowledges, and all *particular* Truths, muſt neceſſarily be fetch'd from the *Deepeſt Grounds*, and therefore muſt needs be *very Speculative*. But, I know I ſpeak to him whoſe Piercing Wit will eaſily comprehend

prehend it. Only, I beſeech you, ſo far to bend your Byaſs, which you muſt needs have contracted by your Long and Steady Meditating on your Way of *Ideas*, till you *reduce* any *Obliquity* that may have prepoſſeſs'd your good Judgment, to a *Rectitude*, or *Indifferency*; and then I cannot doubt, but I may do you ſome Service, even, perhaps, againſt your Will: For, Evidence, if Clear, and well penetrated, does oft-times *force* Aſſent, whether the Will repugns, or no.

10. The *Ideas*, or *Eſſences*, of each Piece of the World's Fabrick were in the Mind of the Divine Architect, ere they were made. Again; Since he did not make them by the Hand of ſome Bungling Journey-man, who might, perhaps, *deviate* from his Pattern, or Model; but immediately, by his own Infinite Wiſdom and Power; it cannot be doubted, but that each Part of the Creation was fram'd exactly according to the Archetypes of thoſe *Unchangeable Ideas*; and therefore, was perfectly *Eſtabliſh'd* in its reſpective Eſſence, or Nature, as thoſe Original Ideas were; that is, they were

were fix'd *to be what they are*, by an *Inerrable* Hand; in which consists that which we call their *Metaphysical Verity*. Wherefore, since all Truth, *Originally*, *Primarily* and *most Fundamentally* consists in this *Metaphysical Verity* of Things, it being the *Immediate* Effect of the *Divine Wisdom*; it follows, that the First *Formal* Truths that can be in our Minds, (which, consequently, are the *Rules*, or *Principles*, to all others,) must be those which *speak*, *express*, or *Affirm* this Metaphysical Verity, or, that the Things *are what they are*. Which kind of *Self-evident* Propositions, can therefore, be no other than those we call *Identical*. This is most Evident, and Inconteſtable: For, since this *Metaphysical Verity*, which (next to the Divine Maker of all Things, from whom it *immediately* proceeded) is the *Ground* and *Cause* of *all Truth*, does consist in this, That Things are *Fix'd* in their Essences, or *are what they are*; 'tis Impossible to *speak* this Truth, or make it a *Formal Truth*, by affirming, or Denying, (that is, by putting it into a *Proposition*;) but by Affirming, that *they are what they are*; which

is

is most evidently an Identical Proposition.

11. Hitherto, then, it is undiscernable, how it can, with any Shew of Reason, be deny'd, that the *Self-Evidence* that so visibly shines in *Identical Propositions*, bids fair towards their being the *First Rule* of Knowing all Truths; or, which is the same, the First Principle to all other Knowledges. For, 1. There cannot be any so *great* Clearness, or Evidence, as is *Self-Evidence*; nor so *Close Connexion* of the Terms in any Proposition, or Speech, that expresses Truth, as is *Perfect Identity*, or *Self-Connexion*; consisting in this, That the *Thing*, or *Mode* of Thing spoken of, *is what it is*, or, *is its self*. 2. 'Tis Impossible any thing else can be so *Solid*, or so *Firmly Establish'd*; being immediately built on the Unchangeable *Metaphysical Verity* it self; or rather, being *It*, spoken, and express'd: Which Verity (as was shewn) is imprinted in the *Essences* of every Created Thing, by the *Immediate* Hand of *Essential Truth*. Whence it is so nearly ally'd to that *Infinite Truth* it self, that it is remov'd but

one

one Degree from it. 3. By reaſon of this Connatural and Immediate Deſcent from that Brighteſt and moſt Glorious Luminary of all Knowledge, *the Father of Lights*, who is *Candor Æternæ Lucis*, and Infinitely Intelligible; it *forces* the Aſſent of *all Mankind* to its Verity. Inſomuch, that no *Diſeaſe* can ſo pervert a Rational Being, which has the leaſt Uſe of Reaſon, as to *deny* it, or *doubt* of it; nor *ſuſpend* their Judgment concerning it: Nor can the higheſt *Paſſion* of the moſt Profligate Wretch living, hurry his Underſtanding into the Admittance of ſuch a *Folly*. No *Scepticalneſs* can call the Truth and Certainty of it into *Queſtion*. No Whimſical *Speculation* can inveigle any Man into a Conceit, that it *can be Falſe*. No *Oppoſition* can make head againſt it; ſince, whatever can be alledg'd to overthrow it, muſt needs appear to be *leſs Evident* than *It*; and, therefore, *Unable* to *ſhock* it. No ſubtil *Diſtinction* can *impair* its Truth; or pretend it is True *in One Reſpect*, but not *in Another*; ſince it is Impoſſible to diſtinguiſh the Copula [*is*;] the Notion of Exiſtence being ſo *perfectly*

fectly Simple, and *most Formal*, or *Indiviſible*, that it can admit of no Diſtinction into *Divers Formalities*; according to One of which, it may be *True*; according to Another, *Falſe*. Nor can it prejudice any *ſuch* Propoſition, to Diſtinguiſh its *Subject*, or *Predicate*; ſince whatever Diſtinction can fall *here* upon the *Subject*, muſt fall upon the *Predicate* too; both of them being the *ſelf-ſame Notion*. By which means, the *Identicalneſs* and *Self-evidence* of the Propoſition will be ſtill the ſame *after* the Diſtinction is given, as it was *before*. So that 'tis Impoſſible to *imagin*, that any thing can be propos'd, which can, *in any Regard*, or *in any Degree*, vye with *Identical Propoſitions*; either in being ſo *Solidly Grounded*, or ſo perfectly *Clear*, *Undeniable*, *Unmiſtakable*, and plac'd above the reach of *any poſſible Attack*. Nor did *Carteſius* himſelf, amongſt all the Evident Things he *call'd into Doubt*, in the leaſt *Queſtion* the Evidence and Truth of *ſuch* Propoſitions, *formally expreſs'd*: Nor could he have done it, without utterly *Deſtroying*, at the ſame time, the Certainty of *all* he could

have ſaid; nay, even of his own Firſt Principle too; as will be ſeen hereafter. From all which Conſiderations, (any *One* of which might ſuffice,) I may Safely and Evidently conclude, that, in point of *Evidence* of its *Truth*, and *Stability* of its *Grounds*, nothing can be any way comparable to the Light which ſtrikes the Eye of our Underſtanding, by its ſteady Rays emitted from theſe Self-evident, or *Identical* Propoſitions: Which goes very far to the Entitling *Theſe*, and Theſe *only*, to be the *Rule of Knowing all Truths*, or the Firſt Principles to *all* Science, in whatever particular Subject; not excepting even *Metaphyſicks* it ſelf.

12. Notwithſtanding all that has been ſo fully evinc'd hitherto, I have, as yet, done but *half* my Buſineſs; or rather, the *better half* is ſtill left behind. For, a *Firſt Rule*, or *Firſt Principle*, requires *Another* Quality, peculiar to it ſelf, to *compleat* its Notion, beſides its being thus *Solidly Grounded*, and thus *Supreamly Evident*; which is, That All other Truths, or Knowledges, muſt be *Rul'd*, or *Principl'd* by *It*: It

muſt

must have an Universal Influence over *all other* Knowledges, and *impart* its Light to *them*. The *former* Qualities will, I believe, be granted to *Identical Propositions*, by every Attentive Considerer, who knows what belongs to Logick, or Reason reflecting on it self; and is, withall, but meanly vers'd in Metaphysicks. This *later* Qualification will be deny'd by *many*, perhaps by *most*; nay, will be fancy'd, and abetted by *very Few*. For, every one's Genius does not lead him to speculate so *deep*; and there are scarce *any* who have *propos'd* this highest and nicest Point, much less handl'd it *at large*; tho' *divers* have given the *Grounds* whence it *must follow*. The Reason of this General Dis-like of *Identical Propositions*, is, because they have such a *Dry Meen*, and *Contemptible Aspect*; so unlikely to give us the least kind of Instruction, or Light, to know any thing but their own Insignificant Selves, that nothing seems more *Ridiculous*, than for any Man, who is to teach others, even to *propose* such Insipid Sayings as a *Means*, much less as a *Rule*, to gain the Knowledge

of any Truth whatever; nor is it Discernable how we can come to know any thing, or *work out* any new Knowledges, by making use of such *Blunt Tools*.

I think I have said the worst against them, that the keenest Adversary can alledge. It remains, then, to shew how I can clear them of this Disgraceful Character; or make out that they have such a *General Influence* over *all other* Truths, as is pretended.

13. I demand, then, of my Opposers, whether it be not Fundamentally necessary in all Discourses about whatever Truth, to *attend* still, and keep an Eye *directed* to the *Nature* of the Thing or *Subject* about which we are Discoursing, and to take special Care we do not *deviate* from it? I do not think any Scholar living, attending to his Natural Thoughts, or Common Sense, will deny this. For, if any Discourse makes the Thing be *otherwise than it is*, it must necessarily be *False*; and expose the Author of it to speak manifest *Contradictions*. Now, I do no more but this, while I make Self-

Self-evident or Identical Propoſitions to be the *Firſt Rules*, or *Firſt Principles* of all other Knowledges: All I do, is, to keep a heedful Eye to the Nature of the *Thing*, and its *Metaphyſical Verity*. Only, becauſe it is manifeſt to every Reflecter, that all our *Diſcourſes* are made up of *Propoſitions*; nor can a *Rule* or *Principle* be expreſs'd, but by ſuch Forms of Speech; nor is the *Comparative*, or (as I may ſay) the *Compoſitive* Nature of our Soul ſatisfy'd, till it has brought the Object it would Diſcourſe about, into ſome *Formal Truth*, (her only Perfection in this State,) which is expreſs'd by a *Propoſition*: Hence, we become forc'd to put the *Nature of the Thing*, or its Metaphyſical Verity, into *ſuch* a Frame of Speaking; ſo to fit it for Diſcourſe: which 'tis Impoſſible to do, but that Speech, or Propoſition, whether we will or no, muſt be an *Identical* one.

14. As for their ſeeming ſo Ridiculous, and Dry, this happens becauſe of their moſt perfect *Simplicity*, having as *little* Compoſition in them as is poſſible; or rather, *none at all*, but what is in the *Form* of Expreſſion; I

doubt not but your Acute Judgment is well aware, that the firſt *Stamina*, in what kind ſoever, are, and muſt be, the *moſt Simple*; and, therefore, ſuch, that, ſhould Nature ſtop her Courſe there, and proceed no farther, they would be the moſt Inſipid, and Uſeleſs Things in Nature. And yet, from ſuch *Simple* Beginnings, or (to uſe *Virgil*'s Expreſſion) *tenues orſus*, all the *moſt Perfect* Productions in *Whole Nature* have their *Riſe*: Nor could any Work of hers ever arrive at Maturity, or attain to that Admirable Frame it afterwards *grows up to*, unleſs it had had at firſt ſuch a *Simple* and *Shapeleſs Origin*. The ſame happens in the Firſt *Stamina* of all our Succeeding Knowledges: They are ſo Simple, and have ſuch an Odd, Bald and Unfledg'd Appearance, that we know not what to make of them, when we regard them only in themſelves; or, what *Uſe* they *are* of in the Acquiſition of Science; yet, without ſuch Simple Beginnings, *fore-laid* in our Knowing Power, no *Diſtinct* Knowledge at all could be had of any other Thing; as will moſt Clearly appear ſhortly.

15. We

15. We may obſerve, that, generally, we are not ſo Senſible of *Goods*, as of *Harms*; becauſe the Former, thro' the Generous Bounty of GOD's Good Providence, are of *ſo many kinds*, ſurrounding us on all ſides, that they are *Common*, and *Quotidian*; whereas, the Later are *Seldom*, and (as it were) *Caſual*: Whence, *Theſe* are *Remarkable*, and apt to ſtrike our Apprehenſions *ſmartly*, and *force* us to *take notice* of them; which *Thoſe*, being *Ordinary*, and *Cuſtomary*, do not. To breed then a due Reflexion, what *Good* thoſe *First Truths* now ſpoken of, laid up in our Minds, do us, we will conſider what *Univerſal Miſchiefs* their proper *Oppoſites*, [*Contradictions*,] would do to *all* our Knowledge; and what a *Malignant Influence* they would have, not only to pervert all our *Actual* Knowledge, but to deſtroy our very *Power* of knowing *any thing*. Let us ſuppoſe then, that thoſe two Propoſitions, [*What is, is not*;] and [*A Thing is not what it is*,] which are the proper Contradictories to thoſe Chief Identicals, [*What is, is*;] and, [*A Thing is what it is*;] to be, both of them, *True*:

Would it be poſſible, in that Caſe, to ſpeak a Word of *Truth*; or, to *Diſcourſe* at all; but, inſtead of ſpeaking conſequently, to talk a Hotch-potch of *Incoherent Nonſenſe*? For, we cannot Affirm any thing to be *True*, but by means of the Copula [*is*,] in whoſe *Connecting* or *Identifying* Senſe, all Truth moſt Formally conſiſts: Wherefore, if that Word, or the Notion it ſignifies, were *Chimerical*, and might be the ſame with [*is not*,] then, ſince there can be no *Middle* between them, all we affirm might be Falſe. And, ſince the *Subject* we ſpeak of, muſt either be ſome *Thing*, or ſome *Mode* of Thing; all that we ſpeak of that Thing would go to wrack, and be *Falſe*, in caſe the *Subject* of our Diſcourſe, or Speech, were not *Diſtinguiſh'd* from *all other* Things or Modes; that is, if it *were not it ſelf only*, but *Another*, all the while. Since then, the *Contradictories* to theſe two Identicals now ſpoken of, have ſuch an *Univerſal Influence*, that they conſtantly *ſet up* Errour, and *deſtroy* Truth; 'tis manifeſt, that *Identical Propoſitions* (their Contradictory Oppoſites) do, for the ſame reaſon,

of

of their own nature, tend to *abet Truth*, and *deſtroy Errour*; and therefore they are deſervedly entitled to be the *Rule of Truth*; the *Influence* they have over *all* Truths being full as *Univerſal*, as *Contradictions*, their Oppoſites, have, to induce Errour.

16. But nothing can more victoriouſly *confute*, or more unanſwerably *convince* an Adverſary, than to ſhew that he muſt be forc'd, for his own Intereſt, to *admit* the Truth of that Tenet which he *oppoſes*. Ask, then, a *Carteſian*, how he knows any *Particular* Truths; or (which is the ſame) how he knows that ſuch Predicates, or Attributes, do belong to ſuch a Subject? He will anſwer, Becauſe he finds thoſe Predicates in the *Idea* he has of ſuch a Thing, or ſuch a Nature. Very good, replies the other: But, how ſhall we know that the Idea you have of that Thing, is not *Chimerical*, and involves in it *many other* Things, as well as *That*? Which, if it does, your Diſcourſe, applying into *That* Thing *only*, muſt needs be Incoherent, and *Falſe*. Your only Anſwer, in this Caſe, can be *This*, That each

Idea you have is *Diſtinct* from *all other* Ideas, and has its Metaphyſical *Verity* and *Unity* peculiar to it ſelf; or (which is the ſame) *is its ſelf only*; which is an *Identical Propoſition*, and ſpeaks, or expreſſes the *Metaphyſical Verity* of each Idea you have. Now, ſay I, hence appears evidently, that this Truth, *viz.* [*Every Idea is it ſelf only*, or *no other*;] which is an *Identical Propoſition*, is the *very Firſt Truth* you can have; and, that on it depends, Fundamentally, your whole Doctrine by way of *Ideas*: For, if this be Falſe, 'tis moſt Evident that your Ideas can give you no *Diſtinct* Knowledge of any *Thing*, or *Mode* of Thing; that is, they could enable you to know *Nothing at all*.

17. You will ſay, perhaps, it is not Needful to *put*, *lay* or *propoſe* ſo expreſly thoſe Identicals, they being ſo very Clear, of themſelves, to all Mankind. I reply, 1. That this comes over to me, as to what relates to their *Clearneſs*, and *Self-Evidence*, and abets my Poſition. 2. That, certainly, That is *moſt needful*, on which, as was now ſhewn, *all depends*. You muſt, then, have thoſe Identicals *in your Mind*, at leaſt

leaſt *Underſtood*, and *Preſuppos'd*, tho' you expreſs them not. 3. You muſt be forc'd to *expreſs* them if you come to *diſcourſe* rigorouſly, and reduce your Theſis to the *Firſt*, and *Self-evident* Truths; without doing which, (eſpecially, if you hap to encounter with a Sceptick,) nothing can be *finally* Decided, or Concluded. 4. The Point is, That 'tis moſt *Needful* to *expreſs* them; nay, *Unavoidable*, when the Queſtion, [*Which is the Firſt Truth that can be*, which gives Light to *all* others,] is in Agitation; as is our Caſe at preſent: You muſt be forc'd to confeſs, that the Truth of theſe Identicals is *Antecedent* to all the following Knowledges you can have by your Ideas; that, thence, you can know Nothing, unleſs this be *Preſuppos'd*, and *Foreknown*; and that, therefore, it influences *all* your *Future* and *Dependent* Knowledges, after its Faſhion; and *gives* and *ſecures* to them all the Strength, Diſtinction and Evidence they have. Whence is clearly inferr'd, that the Self-evident Light which appears in ſuch *Firſt Truths*, ought to be made, by the *Carteſians* themſelves, the

Rule

Rule of Knowing whatever other Truths they can pretend to know by their *Ideas*; that is, the *very First Rule* of all others; that is, the *Only* one: For, none can be, in Proper Speech, a *Rule*, unleſs it be the *Firſt*; all others being *regulated* by that which is the *Firſt*: So that *It*, and only It, is the *Rule*; all the reſt, *Ruled*. And, certainly, it will appear Evident to all Mankind, that what is *moſt Self-evident*, as all *Identicals* are, were there nothing elſe, ſhould be the *Rule* of *Knowing* all other Truths which are not *ſo* Evident as They. Be pleas'd, Sir, to reflect upon that Propoſition, by which you notifie, or expreſs to us *your* Rule of Knowing, *viz.* [*That which I clearly and diſtinctly ſee to be True, is True.*] Conſider, how many Words are in this Propoſition; and that each Word has its Proper, or *Peculiar* Idea, each of which Ideas muſt be *Diſtinct* from all other Ideas; that is, each of them muſt be *the ſame with its ſelf only*, (which make ſo many Identical Propoſitions;) or elſe, none of thoſe Ideas can be poſſibly able to do you any Service. So that, 'tis manifeſt, *your* Rule of Knowing *depends* on

on the Self-evident Light suppos'd to be in *ours*. Whence 'tis Concluded, that *yours* is not the First *Ratio Cognoscendi*, the *First Rule*, or *First Truth*; but, *Ruled* by *ours*, *Grounded* on *ours*, and *Subsequent*, in the Order of Knowing, to ours.

18. I do not expect, that such high Speculations will please every Body: But, I hope, it will plead my Pardon, that I could not avoid it. In so *Nice* a Point, as is the Settling the First Rule of *all* Knowledge; or, what is the very First, Self-evident, and most Firmly-Grounded Truth; no Speculation, resolving *all Dependent* Truths into that which is *Absolutely-Independent*, (as the *Rule* of *all Truth* must be) can be *too Accurate*, or laid *too Deep*. 'Tis not, then, any Humour of mine, or a kind of *Trial of Skill*, which mov'd me to this very *Abstracted*, and Metaphysical Way of Discoursing; but, it was the very *Nature* of the *present Subject*, that *forc'd* me upon it.

19. Nor was it any Care of *overreaching* your Acuteness, nor the Desire of *Opposing* the *Rule* of *Knowing Truth* introduc'd by the Great *Cartesius*,

ſius, which put me upon this Unuſual piece of Doctrine. I had, above twenty Years ago, upon ſome Hints given me by that Second *Ariſtotle*, the profoundly-Learned *Albius*, apply'd my Speculative Thoughts to dig very deep into this Subject, to find out the *Immoveable Center of all Truth*; and I had begun to write a very Speculative Treatiſe, ſhewing how to *reduce* every *Truth* into an *Identical* Propoſition; and every *Errour*, to a *Contradiction*; which, I ſaw, lay hid at the *Bottom* of every *Truth*, and *Falſhood*. This, I ſay, was an *Old Deſign* of mine, before I thought of Oppoſing any, or of being Oppos'd by any. I foreſaw alſo, while I was writing my **Method**, that (it being more eaſie to be *Witty*, than to be *Solid*) Identical Propoſitions would be look'd upon by very *Ingenious* Men, who were not *thorow-Speculators*, as *Sapleſs*, *Uſeleſs*, and *Inſignificant*. Wherefore, I did there take ſome Occaſions, which lay in the Track of my Thoughts, while I was ſettling the *Grounds* to *True Science*, to clear thoſe Firſt Truths from ſuch Unworthy Miſapprehenſions. To this End, I demonſtrated

monſtrated there, *B.* 3. *Leſſ.* 1. §. 3. That all the Force of *Conſequence*, in which conſiſts our *Rationality*, can only be built upon *ſuch* Propoſitions. I ſhew, *B.* 2. *E.* 2. in what their *Self-evidence* conſiſts: What is the *Firſt* of them, and their ſeveral Sorts and Degrees. I ſet my ſelf to Demonſtrate, by many Arguments, from §. 11. to the End of that Leſſon, that all Firſt Principles muſt be *Identical Propoſitions*; and (§. 19.) that plain Reaſon teaches us it muſt be ſo: Which evinced, it follows, that whoever denies *theſe* to be *Uſeful*, muſt, with the ſame Breath, affirm, that all *Firſt Principles* are *Uſeleſs*, and good for nothing; which is a ſtrange Poſition. Nay, ſince there is an *Order* in Truths, and therefore all *Second* Principles have their Force from the *Firſt*, it follows, that we can have *no Uſe* of *Second* Principles, if the *Firſt* be *Uſeleſs*; and ſo, we muſt talk ramblingly, and at random, all our Lives, without *any* Principles *at all*. I manifeſt the ſame, (*L.* 3.) by *Inſtances*, fetch'd from the Mathematicks, and other Sciences; and ſhew *what Uſe* is to be made of them;

which.

which is not to make them either of the *Premiſſes* in a *Syllogiſm*; but to avail our ſelves of them in a higher nature. I ſhew (*B.* 2. *L.* 2. §. 18.) that even plain, Uncultivated Nature makes the Vulgar *recurr* to them, as their *Firſt Principles*, when they would expreſs that which is deciſive of the Diſpute, and *Undeniable*. I prove, that all *Middle Terms* which are *Proper*, are built upon the ſame Ground with them. I endeavour (*B.* 3. *L.* 3. §§. 16, 17, 18.) to evince clearly, that All *Truths* have, at the bottom, *Identical Propoſitions*, and are *Reducible* to them; and I attempt to ſhew, (*Leſſ.* 4.) the Way how to reduce *Inferiour* Truths to thoſe *Higheſt* ones. All which, if I have fully prov'd, eſpecially, that *All Firſt Principles are Identical Propoſitions*, which bears all along with it, and is concluded there by divers Demonſtrations, on which I dare venture my whole Cauſe, that they are impoſſible to be ſolv'd; then, I may ſafely preſume, I have evinc'd, that the *Intelligibility* and *Light* of Identical Propoſitions is *moſt Self-evident*; the *Ground* on which they are built, moſt *Solid*;

Solid; and the *Uſefulneſs* or *Influence* of them upon all other Truths, moſt *Univerſal*: And, therefore, that they are every way qualify'd to be the *Firſt* and *Only Rule of Knowing all Truths whatever.*

20. To comprehend better the Evidence of this Diſcourſe, let us imagine a Man *deveſted* of the Knowledge of Identical Propoſitions; and then let us conſider whether he could know *any thing at all*, or what he is *good for*. To inſtance in one of them; Let us ſuppoſe him Ignorant that *A Thing is what it is*; or a *Carteſian*, that *Each Idea is it ſelf, and no other*; and Common Senſe will tell every one, that ſuch a Man could *know nothing*, nor make any Judgment or Diſcourſe concerning any *Thing*, or *Idea* either; ſince *that* Thing, or Idea, he would Judge, or Diſcourſe of, is, perhaps, all the while, for ought he knows, *Another*. Whoever would ſee farther the *Uſe* of Identical Propoſitions brought to *Practice*, may pleaſe to obſerve how they are ſerviceable in many places of my three Treatiſes here mention'd: Not by *propoſing* them firſt, and

and then *Deducing* and *Arguing* from them, as ſome may miſtake; but by *Reducing* the Truth of my Diſcourſes up to thoſe Standards of all *Truth*; and by ſhewing theſe to be engag'd in the Patronage and Support of my *Theſis*; by which means, they ſmartly *clinch* the Force and Evidence of my Arguments, by bearing up to *them*, and relying on *them*.

21. It was a well-aim'd Reach of Speculation in Mr. *Locke*, [*Eſſay concerning Humane Underſtanding*, *B.* 2. *Ch.* 32. §. 2.] where he ſays, that the *Metaphyſical Verity* of Things *contains in them a Tacit Propoſition:* Which I would underſtand, not to be meant of that Verity, as it is *in the Thing* it ſelf; but as it is *in our Underſtanding*, where only Propoſitions *are*, or *can be*. For, ſince this Metaphyſical Verity is not a *Natural* Notion, imprinted *directly* by our Senſes, it can only be known by *Reflexion*. The Mind, then, careful to be well aſſur'd of the *Subject* of which it is to Judge, or Diſcourſe, (without which *Pre-aſſurance*, it could do *neither*,) *reviews* it heedfully, and ſteadily; and then ſays of it, within it ſelf;

['*Tis*

[*'Tis this, and no other.*] Which is an Identical Propoſition, *in Subſtance*; tho', for a Reaſon we ſhall give ſhortly, we put it afterwards into an Expreſſion *more formally* Identical. Why the Soul does this, ſprings hence; becauſe, being naturally made to ſee Truth; and no Truth (in the Firſt and Proper Signification of that Word) being poſſible to be had, without *Affirming*, or *Denying*; hence 'tis *Natural*, and *Neceſſary*, that, when it comes to review the Object, in order to *ſee its Truth* or *Falſhood*, it ſhould put it into the Frame of an *Identical Propoſition*; only which kind of Speeches are capable to *Affirm*, or *Deny*. And this is that I mean, when I uſe to ſay, (as I do frequently,) that the Nature of the Soul is *Comparative*, or *Relative*: For, when a Propoſition is molded in the Mind, the Predicate of it is *Compar'd* or *Related* to the Subject, in order to ſee their *Agreement*, or *Diſagreement*; without which, nothing can be *known* to be, in proper Speech, *True*, or *Falſe*: In which Poſition, Mr. *Locke* perfectly agrees with me. Now, ſetting aſide *Extrinſecal Denominations*, which

which are not at all found *in* the *Thing*, but meerly *tack'd* to it by our Consideration; this *Comparing* is, either of the *Mode*, to the *Thing*; and, seeing, in general, *how* it affects it, as is seen in the two last Predicables of *Porphyrius*; which, because Modes are not Distinct *Things*, and yet differ vastly from the Formal Notion of the *Thing* it self, of which they are *Modes*, can only be Connected with it *Materially*; or, as Belonging to the *Thing*, as their *Subject*: Or else, the Mind compares the Thing to what's *Formal*, or *Essential* to it. And this, either in the *Whole*, as is found in our Identical Propositions; for which reason, I am forc'd to make a *Sixth* Predicable, in which the *Whole* is predicated, *entirely* and *formally*, of the *Whole*: Or else, *in Part*; when some *Part* of the Essence or Nature of the Whole Thing is *Predicated*, or Compar'd to it *diversly*; as is seen in *Porphyrius*'s Three First Predicables, call'd *Genus*, *Species*, and *Difference*; which do, all of them, *in part*, belong to the Essence. These Notes borrow'd from Logick, and premis'd, 'tis here farther to be Noted, that all those.

those Comparisons, or Relations the Soul makes in whatever Proposition, is done by that Relation, call'd *Identity*; as is manifest from the Copula [*Est.*] Wherefore, to review what we said lately; the Predicates belonging to the two last Predicables of *Porphyrius*, are Referr'd only according to *Material Identity*; or, only as found to belong to the same *Thing*, and *not* as *Essential* to it. The three former are related, or *Compar'd*, as Identify'd *Formally* to the Thing; yet, still so, as but several *Parts* of its Essence. The 6th is, when the *Whole* Thing is Compar'd, Related to, or *Identify'd* with the *Whole* Thing; and this *Entirely*, or according to all that is in the Thing. And, this Way of *Comparing* or *Relating* the *Whole* Thing to *its Self*, is that Relation of Identity, which is the *most* Essential, *most* Formal, and *most* Expresly such, of all other; and, is only found in those Propositions we call *First Principles*. Which Propositions being, for the Reasons given, most Fully and Properly such, we do therefore, κατ' ἐξοχὴν, call *Identical*.

22. Whence

22. Whence may be ſeen, that the Virtue of Identical Propoſitions *threads*, or *runs thorow* all thoſe Propoſitions that are *Eſſential*; and, collaterally, thoſe alſo whoſe Predicates are immediately and neceſſarily *Connected* with the Eſſence. For, ſince the *Parts* are found in the *Whole*, and all Identification *in part*, is a *Part* of the Identification of the *Whole* Thing with its ſelf; it follows, that Propoſitions, or Truths, in which the Predicate is but *Part* of the *Whole*, are, in Reality, but *Parts* of our *Identicals*. Nor is this all; but the Force of every *Conſequence* too is Grounded on them, in which conſiſts all our *Rationality*; as was ſhewn above. Whence Mr. *Locke*, in his *Eſſay*, *B.* 4. *Ch.* 2. §. 7. ſhews, very Judiciouſly, that every Step we take in true Demonſtrations, is made by *Intuitive*, or Self-evident Knowledges.

23. Whence, 'tis Evident, that even *your* Rule will force you, tho' contrary to your Intention, to come over to us; and, will oblige you to guide your ſelves by *Connexion of Terms*, (which is *our* Way,) however you ſtrive

ſtrive to avoid it. You ſay, that *when you Clearly and Diſtinctly ſee* a Propoſition to be *True*, it *muſt be ſo:* And we ſay, you can never ſee a Propoſition to be *True*, but when you ſee its two Extremes, (or, the Subject and Predicate,) *Connected*. You will alledge, you ſee it in your *Idea*: But, (as is ſhewn above,) there are *three Parts* in a Propoſition, which have, each of them, a *Diſtinct Idea*; in regard, the ſelf-ſame Idea which is of the *Subject*, cannot be the Idea of the *Predicate*; for, this would throw you upon *Identical Propoſitions*, which is *our Rule:* And, the Idea of the *Copula* is, moſt evidently, quite *Different* from the other Two; being, preciſely, *That which Affirms*, or *Denies*; which *neither* of the other *does*. This being ſo, I beſeech you to reflect, that *Truth* (which is the Thing in queſtion) cannot conſiſt in theſe Ideas, *ſingly conſider'd*; for, taken *thus*, they are, all of them, *Simple Apprehenſions*, which can neither be *True*, nor *Falſe*. It remains, then, that you muſt confeſs, Truth can be only in thoſe Ideas, *put together*, or *Connected*; nor, can they be *Connected*,

nected, but by that which only is apt to Connect or Identifie them; *viz.* by the Copula [*Eſt*;] for, theſe three Parts cannot be fram'd into one Speech, by any other manner, but by putting the Word [*Eſt*] between them. Wherefore, 'tis Evident, that you cannot pretend to *ſee clearly and diſtinctly*, that any Propoſition is *True*, (which is *your* Rule to know Truth,) but by ſeeing its ſaid Terms *Connected*, or *Identify'd*. I ſee not how you can, even in your Way of Ideas, deny this Clear Diſcourſe: And, if you grant it, we are thus far Friends. Only, we add, that, to make ſuch *Connexions* the RULE to all others, you muſt allow them to be *Self-Connexions*, or *Identical*; which is *our* Poſition. So that, which way ſoever you wriggle, to *avoid* our Rule, the Light of Common Reaſon, or Natural Logick, will force you into it, whether you will or no.

24. As for the *Dryneſs* of Identical Propoſitions, which goes not down with ſome Men of Fancy, I have this to add; that That which is objected to them, as *Scandalous*, and *Opprobrious*,

is, in reality, a Great *Commendation* to them. For, this Conceit of their *Dryneſs* ſprings from their ſeeming *too Obvious*. Whereas, were not the very *Firſt Principles*, and the *Rule of Knowing all Truths*, thus moſt *Plain*, *Eaſie* and *Obvious*, but needed *the leaſt Reflexion*, or *Conſideration*, they would be utterly unfit to be what they ought to be; *Firſt Principles*, and *Self-evident*. Nothing pleaſes the Palate of ſuch Gentlemen, which is not *New*, or ſuch as they *knew not before*. Not Reflecting, in the mean time, that nothing is *New*, but *Concluſions* lately Deduced; and that all Firſt Principles muſt be as *Old* as Nature, or *Mankind* it ſelf: Nor could they be the *Rule of Truth*, which muſt oblige all Mankind to ſee their Evidence, and Aſſent to their Verity, were they otherwiſe.

25. How pretty a Deluſive Faculty is this *Fancy* of ours! and, how apt, if we be not aware, to decoy us, every Step, into *Errour*, by Cuſtomary Appearances; which, by ſtriking often upon it, would fool our Reaſon! Our own Thoughts, and thoſe of others, do, in all our Converſations,

uſe to come to us, clad in *Words*: Whence it happens, that 'tis very hard, liquidly and clearly to *ſtrip* the *Senſe* from thoſe *Words*; and to conſider *It*, and *nothing but It*. If a Man ſays, [*Every Thing is Diſtinct from all other Things*,] none is apt to ſmile at him, or impute it as Ridiculous, or Fooliſh: But, if he ſays, [*A Thing is its ſelf*,] Witty Men can ſcarce contain their *Jeſt* at ſuch an Idle Propoſition: And yet they are, moſt evidently, the ſelf-ſame in *Senſe*; for, that which is *Diſtinct from all others*, muſt either be *its Self*, or *Nothing*; and, the taking away all *Diſtinction*, does, almoſt in Terms, at leaſt, moſt *formally*, and *neceſſarily*, put *Identity*. Let us take another Inſtance: If one ſays, [*A Whole is more than a Part*,] it appears to ſuch Men, wondrous Wiſe; and, none blames him, in the leaſt, that ſays it, or lays it for a *Principle*. But, if he ſays, and puts for a Principle, [*What's more than a Part, is more than a Part*,] it is good Luck if they do not think he deſerves *Midas*'s Ears. Yet, both of theſe Propoſitions are the *ſelf-ſame*, and both of them *equally*, and

and moſt perfectly Identical *in Senſe*; and only differ in the *Manner of Expreſſion*. Which I thus ſhew: A *Whole* conſiſts of its *Parts*; and, ſince every Thing *is* that of which it *conſiſts*, A Whole *is* its Parts. But, the Word [*Parts*,] being *Plural*, ſignifies *more than One Part*; Wherefore, [*A Whole is more than a Part*,] is the ſame as to ſay, [*What's more than a Part, is more than a Part*;] which is as perfectly Identical, as can be imagin'd. Nay, more; If we regard it well, we ſhall find, that the former Propoſition had not been known, Speculatively, to be *Self-evident*, nor could have been *made out* to be ſuch, but becauſe it is the ſame with this later, whoſe Terms are *moſt formally* Identical; to which, the other is eaſily reduc'd.

26. It will be ask'd, why we could not let the Senſe alone in its *former* Dreſs, (which became it much better than this other,) ſince it was Self-evident enough *before*? I anſwer; Becauſe the Self-evidence *better appears*, when it is alſo brought to Terms moſt perfectly Identical; as any one may diſcern, who compares the two Propoſitions

now mention'd: And, hence alſo the *Sceptical* Diſſenter, or Denier, is moſt *forcibly*, and unavoidably thrown upon a *Direct* and *Open Contradiction*; for, to Deny thoſe Identicals, which are ſuch, not only in the *Senſe*, but in the *manner of Expreſſion* too, is, to avow a Contradiction propos'd *bare-fac'd*, and in the *plaineſt Terms*; which could not have appear'd *ſo clearly* from the Terms of the *former* Propoſition. Laſtly, A Brabbling *Pyrrhonian* might have drawn the Words, [*Whole*,] and [*Part*,] into ſome ſiniſter Conſtruction; and have wrangl'd and quibbled about them, by putting upon them *divers Senſes*; which he is quite debarr'd of, when the Terms are *thus* Identical: For, when the *Words* of *both* the Terms are the very *ſelf-ſame*, whatever Senſe he gives the Words of the Subject, muſt be allow'd to the Words of the Predicate too; ſo that he will be put quite paſt his Shifts, and the Propoſition will ſtill remain *equally* Identical as it was *before*, maugre all his Cavils, and Evaſions.

27. By this time I have, as I conceive, good reaſon to preſume enough has

has been alledg'd by us, to prove that our **Rule of Truth** is, in every Regard, qualify'd for such an Employ. We will therefore, if you please, now turn the Tables, and examine what *your* Rule can pretend to; or, what it it has in it, which can entitle it to be such a *Rule*; or, in any respect, counter-ballance what has been produc'd for *ours*. To do which, we will consider it, both as to the *Act* of your Clear and Distinct Perception, the *Immediate Object* of that Act; and, at the same time, as to the *Stability* which each of these may be conceiv'd to have from its *Ground*. We will begin with the *Object*, that determines your Faculty of Understanding to *this* or *that* Particular *Act*. If I rightly conceive the *Cartesian* Doctrine, the *Immediate Objects* of your Clear and Distinct Perception, are *your Ideas*, in which appears this *Truth* which, you say, you Clearly and Distinctly see. Now, these *Ideas* of yours are, *confessedly*, Effects produc'd by a *Second Cause*, the *Mind* it self; and not the *Immediate* Work of the **First Cause**, on which (as has been shewn) *our Rule* is built:

Which gives *ours* an *Infinite* Advantage, above *yours*, as to the *Stability* of its Ground: *Ours* having, for its Solid Foundation, the Ideas in the *Divine* Underſtanding; whence are unqueſtionably *Deriv'd*, and by which are *Eſtabliſh'd*, the *Eſſences* of Things, on which *ours* is Immediately Grounded: Whereas, *your Ideas* are held by your ſelves, to be the Creatures, or *Productions* of your own *Mind*; which (were it granted it *could* produce any ſuch Ideas) is a *Defective Agent* of its own Nature; and, therefore, its Productions ſo *Uncertain*, that it ſeems a moſt ſtrange piece of Doctrine, to build all the Certain Truth and Knowledge Mankind can poſſibly have on ſuch an *Unſteady* Foundation. How many Thouſands, even of a fair Pitch of Underſtanding, have miſtaken *Lively Fancies*, for *Evident Knowledge*? Muſt, therefore, all Truth be built on a *Miſtakable* Principle? Nay, more; ſuch Men, judging thus, by Miſtake, the Thing was *Evident*, taking them as poſſeſs'd with ſuch a Miſtake, *cannot but Aſſent* to it, as *True*, tho' it be never ſo *Falſe*: Muſt we therefore *conſecrate*

ſecrate this Erroneous *Ground* of theirs, into *a Rule of Truth*? Oh, but it belongs to God's Goodneſs, to take care, that, ſince we *cannot but Aſſent* upon ſuch a Clear and Diſtinct Appearance, we ſhould not be *forced upon Error*. Why ſo? If you will needs leave the Things his Wiſdom has made, take *your own Way*, and *over-conceit* the Infallibility of your own Faculty, in judging you *Clearly and Diſtinctly know* a Thing, when you do but *fancy* it; is God's Providence anſwerable to ſupport every over-weening Raſhneſs of ours? Doubtleſs, his Goodneſs is never wanting to ſuch a conſiderable *Species*, as is *Mankind*, in Neceſſaries to their Knowledge, for which their Nature was made: But, if there be *Another* Way, *more* Solidly Grounded and *Evident* than yours; nay, againſt which (as has been prov'd) there can lie no Exception, and Men will not *take it*; his Providence is acquitt'd, and, 'tis juſt to let them delude themſelves. At leaſt, it will be ſaid, that this Clear and Diſtinct Perception is a Rule of Truth *to us*, tho' not to Truth, conſider'd *in it ſelf*. But, if

what we assent to upon that Imaginary Ground, may still be false, for any thing that Ground can assure us, how can it be a Rule of Truth *to any*? To return to our Ideas; The main Point is, that it is so far from Evident that there can be any such Ideas *Elicited*, or *Produced*, by our Minds, that there are many pretended Demonstrations against it; as may be seen in *Ideæ Carteſianæ Expenſæ*, *Exam.* 2. from § 31. to §. 49. Nay, there are very many others in my *Second Preliminary*, proving there can *need none*; the *Thing* it self being objectively in our Understanding. To none of which Demonstrations, I do expect any Full and *Solid Answer*; but only, perhaps, some *slight Touches*. I add, that the Ideists themselves cannot agree amongst themselves, what kind of Things these Spiritual Ideas should be. Mr. *Locke* makes them to be *Similitudes*; Which Mr. *Le Grand* denies; and, is so at variance with himself, that he puts them to be many several sorts of Things, and those *Inconsistent* with one another; and so makes them to be *Chimeras*. This Inconsonancy

of

of those Writers with one another, and with their own selves, makes it very Dubious that there *are* any *such Things* as these *Ideas*, at all; at least, 'tis Evident, that they who ground all their Doctrine upon them, do not know *what* they are; and, therefore, they build all their *Hypotheſis* on *they know not what*. And, if this be so, then the *Immediate Object* of their Clear and Distinct Perception is, perhaps, a *Non-Entity*; or, at least, *such* an Entity, as no Man living (nor themselves neither) knows *what to make of it*.

28. Again; This *Object*, which you Clearly and Distinctly see to be *True*, must be some Mental Proposition; for, nothing can be Formally True, but some *Speech that Affirms*, or *Denies*. Now, say we, 'tis most incontestable, that the *First* Proposition we can make of a Thing, is, to *affirm* its *Metaphysical Verity*; or, to say, *'Tis this*, (or *its self*,) and *no other*: For, the *Subject* being the *Basis* of all our Thoughts, we must *fix it* certainly, Clearly and Distinctly, ere we can, with *Certainty*, say any thing *else* of it. This Proposition, then, say we, is such, that our

Underſtanding no ſooner opens its Eye, to take a View of it, but it *muſt* aſſent to it, becauſe of the *Self-evident Identification of its Terms*; whoſe *Self-Evidence* we do therefore make our *Rule*. It remains then, that you ſhew us ſome Truth, or Propoſition, which is *before* this, (which we think to be the *Firſt*,) and which both makes it ſelf *thus Viſible*; and alſo, by its Self-evident Light, gives Clearneſs and Intelligibility to *all other* Truths; and, laſtly, which is ſo *Firmly Grounded*, that it may be a *Solid* Firſt Principle, and not an *Aery* and *Phantaſtick* Conceit. You muſt then, (we ſay,) produce, and ſhew us ſome *other* Propoſition than that you have brought hitherto, which tells us your *Clear* and *Diſtinct Perception* is *your Rule*; for, this, you ſee, is already, by many Unanſwerable Arguments, thrown out of doors, and ſhewn Unfit to be a *Rule*. And, till you do this, you ought not to be offended, if we tell you friendly, and plainly, that you have *no Rule of Truth at all*.

29. Thus much for the Immediate Object of your *Clear* and *Diſtinct Perception*.

ception. As for the *Act* it *ſelf*, I beſeech you, Sir, conſider on what a *Sandy Foundation* you would build all *Truth*. What ſignifies yours, or mine, or any Man's *Judgment*, that he *Clearly and Diſtinctly ſees* a Truth; or, that he *muſt* Aſſent, or *may not* Aſſent to it? What ſignifie theſe, I ſay, to the *Truth of the Thing*? Muſt Truth be built on Men's *Judgments*, or their *Manner of Conceiving*? What's True, is *Infallibly* ſuch; and this, by virtue of its *Grounds*. Is our *Judgment*, or *Manner of Conceiving*, ſuch a *Certain Ground*, or *Infallible*? How many Inſtances is the World full of, to prove thoſe Perceptions of ours, tho' judg'd by us *moſt Evident*, to be Fallacious? A Paſſionate Man, highly Injur'd, and bent upon Revenge, *judges* it *moſt Evident* that he ought to take his Private Satisfaction: And, you can do no more, but *verily Judge* you have this Clear and Diſtinct Perception, that ſuch or-ſuch a Propoſition is True. I am to preſume, that thoſe *Carteſians* who ſtigmatiz'd me with the Ignominious Note of being *Impious againſt God, &c.* judg'd they did *Clearly* ſee,

I was

I was thus wicked; for, otherwiſe, they left their *own* beloved *Rule*, to *blacken* me; which is too high a *Malice* for any Man to charge them with: And yet, no Man living, as far as my ſelf, or my Friends, can diſcern, did think ſo, but *themſelves*; for, 'tis hard to conceive, that, if others had thought ſo, none of them ſhould have that Zeal for God's Honour, as to object it, or reprehend me for it: Nor am I to doubt but they thought they *clearly and diſtinctly ſaw*, that when I ſaid, *Annihilation* was *Impoſſible*, I did, by that Doctrine, *ſet upon God himſelf*: And, yet, tho' the Learned *Albius* maintain'd the ſame, in his *Metaphyſicks*, 50 Years before, no Friend ever admoniſh'd him, that by ſaying ſo, he had fallen into a *Wicked Errour*: Nor any of his Oppoſers, who were very Learned Men, tho' they gather'd many Propoſitions out of his Books, which ſeem'd to ſound ill, did ever object *This*; whereas, had they judg'd it Impious, they would not have ſpar'd him, but have laid load upon him for it. But, it ſeem'd, they all wanted this Gift of Clear and Diſtinct Perception,

ception, which is *peculiar* to the *Carteſians*. To come to other Inſtances; How frequently are People miſtaken, in *thinking* they have a *Clear and Diſtinct Perception*, or *Perfect Evidence*! *Prejudice*, *Faction* and *Education* work this ill Effect, and make Men abſolutely judge they ſee *moſt Evidently*, they are in the right. People far gone in the *Spleen*, or a deep *Melancholy*, do Aſſent, and Judge, perhaps, more Firmly than you do, that they *ſee Clearly* twenty Ridiculous Fooleries to be *True*. High-flown *Enthuſiaſts* judge the ſame. Pious Women, and Prudent in other Things, if much given to Introverſion, judge, they *ſee clearly and diſtinctly* (nay, far *more lively* than *we* do) many ſtrange Things in their Imaginary *Viſions* and *Revelations*; inſomuch, that they would pawn their very *Souls* for their *Truth*; which, yet, are oft known, by their Effects, to be meer *Illuſions of Fancy*. From all which Errours and Inconveniences, our *Rule* is *Free*: For, who can, out of Humour, Precipitancy, Fancy, Diſeaſe, or any other Caſualty whatever, be *deceiv'd*, in Judging, that *Identical Propoſitions* are

are *True?* This, then, unanswerably concludes *ours* to be the Genuin *Rule of Truth*; in regard, this must be such as all Men *must* be *forc'd* to Assent to, unanimously *Agree* in it; nor can ever hap to be *Deceiv'd* in it by any Chance whatever: Since, otherwise, the *whole Nature* of those Men would be Depraved, and good for nothing, as having no Rule by which to know *any* Truth *whatever*. Nay, it must be such as may be *produc'd openly*, by the Asserters of any Truth; that, by alledging *It*, they may be able to convince *others*, that what they maintain is a Real Truth, and not some *Phantastick Conceit* of their own; without which, their Clear and Distinct Perception is *Invisible*, and so can satisfie no Man; nor clear themselves from being Self-conceited; but, to argue like Phanaticks, who pretend they discern Things by an *Inward Light*, which none can see but *themselves*, nor they themselves make it visible to *others*. Of which, more hereafter.

30. I beg of you, once more, (the Point being of great Importance,) that this Question, concerning your Rule, may,

may be rightly ſtated, and underſtood. None doubts, but that, if we *clearly* know a Thing *to be* True, *it is True*; otherwiſe, it would follow, that we may know what *is not*; or, (which is the ſame,) *may know* that which is *not to be known*. The only Queſtion, then, is, Whether we may not be Miſtaken in *Judging we know it*, when, indeed, we do *not know* it, but only *fancy* it: Which is a Thing ſo Common amongſt all Mankind, that not very many eſcape this Fault of *Overweening*. Wherefore, ere you can pretend that this Rule of yours is *Uſeful*, and a *Certain Means* to know Truth, you ſhould firſt preſcribe us ſome Self-evident Rule, how we may *know aſſuredly*, that our *Judgment* that we do Clearly and Diſtinctly know a Thing, is not a *Miſtake*: For, otherwiſe, we are often apt to think we do moſt certainly *know* a Thing, when we have only a *Lively Apprehenſion*, or *Fancy* of it. Beſides which, this Rule muſt have Force upon *all Mankind*, that we may eaſily make it out to *others*, that we do *indeed* and really *know*, and not meerly *preſume* we know, when, perhaps,

we

we *do not*: Otherwiſe, it will neither give *others*, nor *our ſelves*, any Certainty that what we *imagin* we know, is *True*. This is the true Difficulty; and againſt this, I do not diſcern any effectual Proviſion made by you; nor how you *can* make *any*, without having recourſe to the Self-evident Connexion of the Terms in an Identical Propoſition. This Self-evident Connexion we can *produce openly*, to every Man's Eye; whereas, you cannot *produce* your pretended Clear and Diſtinct Perception to *any* Man: And, it being, when thus *produced* by us, impoſſible not to be *ſeen* and *acknowledg'd* by any Man, who has any Uſe of his Intellectual Faculty, 'tis able to give perfect Satisfaction to *our ſelves*, and to *others* alſo, that we neither *are*, nor *can be* Miſtaken in our Judgment, that we *do* really and indeed *Know* it; and, not only *Deem* it. You ſee, Sir, where the Difficulty pinches. That can never be a Certain Rule to *me*, or to *any Man*, which I can never be ſure I make uſe of: Now, 'tis evident by what is ſaid here, I cannot be aſſur'd I do *clearly and diſtinctly know*, unleſs my Judgment

ment that I *do ſo* be ſecur'd from *Miſtake*: For, if I be miſtaken in that Judgment, and *do not* clearly and diſtinctly know, your Rule affects not me at all; nor am I a jot the *better* for it, or nearer the Knowing any Truth *by it*: But, which is yet worſe; 'tis Evident from this Diſcourſe, that there needs *another* Rule of Knowing, *Antecedent* to yours, to guide my *Judgment* that I *do* clearly and diſtinctly *know*, and do not *miſtake*, or raſhly *preſume* I know; as we experience, the Generality of Mankind does. Which evidently concludes, that the Propoſition by which you expreſs your pretended Rule of Knowing, may, indeed, be a Truth, (in caſe you *do* really know,) but can never be a *Rule of Truth* to you, me, or any Man: For, this muſt be *First known*, or *Self-known*, to all *Mankind*; or otherwiſe, it needs *another* Antecedent Rule, to make it Uſeful; and, ſo it is *Ruled*, and *no Rule*. Here it is, then, that the Point *ſticks*; and, here 'tis *like to ſtick*, for any thing I can imagin, in behalf of the *Carteſians*.

31. I am apt to apprehend, that your Acute Wit will object, that *ſome few*

few of those *Instances* I alledg'd formerly, of Men who verily judg'd they *clearly and distinctly knew* such and such Things to be True, and yet were mistaken in thus Judging, do fall short of Concluding; I mean, *those* that concern'd People in *Diseases*; which you may, with some reason, think, are known to be plain Deviations from Nature, by an easie *Criterion*; *viz.* by the *Standard of Mankind*, who have the *right Use* of their *Reason*. Which I shall not contest with you; nor had I brought such as these, but that I see your Writers bring the same against the Certainty of our Senses; as, that *Icterical* People see all Things *Yellow*, and such like; which are solv'd by the same *Criterion*. But, what are these to many *others* which I there alledg'd; and could press farther, were it suitable to the Brevity I had intended. To force that Objection home, what shall we think of *Speculative Men*, and *Great Philosophers*; nay, of many *Great Mathematicians*, who thought they had most certainly *Squar'd the Circle*? They are held to be Men in their perfect Wits; nay, they are held to be *Can-*

did

did too; and, moreover, *Learned*; and, which is more, both Sides offer *Demonſtrations* for their Tenet; and have, oft-times, great Multitudes that follow them, and embrace their Doctrine. Can it be deny'd, but that ſuch very *Learned*, *Acute* and *Ingenious* Men do verily Judge that they *clearly and diſtinctly ſee* their Doctrine to be True? And yet, we are certain that, ſince they *contradict* one another, *one* Side muſt needs be in an *Errour* in that Judgment. We will bring it yet nearer home, and lay it even at our own Doors.

32. I do not doubt, but your ſelf (for, I cannot ſuſpect your Candour) does verily judge that you *clearly and diſtinctly perceive*, or (which is the ſame) have *Perfect Evidence*, that *your* Way of *Ideas* is the *True* Way to Science: And *I*, on the *other* ſide, am as fully perſuaded, as that I *live*, that I do *clearly and diſtinctly ſee*, it is ſo far from being the *Way* to Science, that it is *perfectly Groundleſs*, and leads to *Innumerable Errours*. That *you* are thus perſuaded, ſeems *very Evident* to *you*; for which, I am very willing to take your

Word..

Word. And, that *I* am thus fully perſuaded I do Clearly and Diſtinctly ſee the *Contrary*, beſides my faithful Aſſeveration, I believe Indifferent Men will think I have given ſufficient Teſtimony, by bringing ſo many pretended Demonſtrations *againſt your Way*; and hazarding my Credit, by *vouching* them to be *Concluſive*; which, therefore, are ſo many *Sure Gages* for my *Sincerity*, when I declare this to be my Sentiment. Add, that theſe Demonſtrations are not like Flaſhes of *Wit*, coin'd by my own Brain; for, then, perhaps, I might, for ſome by-end of Applauſe, or ſome ſuch Foolery, have *falſly pretended* they were my true Thoughts: But, they are all built upon the Nature of the *Thing*, or Subject in hand; which being Eſtabliſh'd to *be what it is*, 'tis beyond the Wit or Power of Man, to make, marr, alter, or deface it; and, ſhould I go about to *diſguize* or *miſ-repreſent* it, 'tis eaſie for any Adverſary to ſhew, I ſpeak Contradictions, and expoſe me to open Shame for my *Confident* Ignorance: For, what is *againſt* the Nature of the Thing, makes that Thing *to be what it is not*; which is a plain

plain Contradiction. This, then, being ſo manifeſt, that I may convince you by your own Method, Why ought not you, by your Way of *Doubting* of every thing that has any Shew or Poſſibility of *Falſhood*, or any *Uncertainty*, to lay aſide, and renounce *your Rule of Truth*, as *Uncertain* and *Fallacious*; ſince we do *both* of us *follow* it to our power; and, yet, ſince we *contradict* one another ſo Diametrically, one of us is, notwithſtanding, in a *vaſt Errour!* Here is *Matter of Fact*, then, againſt the Uſefulneſs of *your Rule*; and that too, as Certain, and Evident, as that one (or both of us) is not the worſt ſort of Hypocrites; that is, *belies* himſelf, and his *own* Thoughts: Whereas, I believe, no Man that knows either of us, had ever ſuch a bad Opinion of us. I could preſs this Topick much farther; but I had rather leave it to your Sincere and Deliberate Conſideration.

33. The *Rule* by which we are to *know Truth*, ought therefore, (as was ſaid,) in ſuch a manner *oblige* all Mankind to *Aſſent*, that it ſhould be apt, of it ſelf, to *compoſe* all *Differences* in Opinion,

Opinion, by Applying, and Bearing up to it: Whereas, yours can compoſe *none* at all; but, contrariwiſe, engages Learned Men in an *Endleſs Wrangle*. We both grant, That if we *ſee* a Thing clearly to be True, it *is* True; ſince Common Senſe tells every Man, that none can *ſee* what *is not to be ſeen*: Nor is there any ſuch Myſtery, or Maſterſhip, in advancing this obvious Poſition; or, for magnifying *Carteſius* ſo highly, for *inventing* it; ſince, I think, no Man living ever deny'd it. The Queſtion is, Which of us has this *True Evidence*, which you call *Clear and Diſtinct Perception*? You will ſay, *you have it*, and *I want it*: I ſhall reply, that *I have it*, and *you want it*. *You* will blame ſome Defect in *my Underſtanding*, or ſome untoward *Byaſs* or *Propenſion of my Will*, both which, according to Mr. *Le Grand*, (*p.* 93.) can make one deceiv'd in thinking that he evidently *perceives*: And I, on the other ſide, think I may, with *equal* Juſtice, blame *yours*: And, ſo, we may come to lay the Fault, either on the *Weakneſs* of one another's *Underſtanding*, or the *Depravedneſs* of his *Will*; which

which naturally leads Men to pelt one another with *Raſh Judgments*, and *hard Words*: But, ſince we can, neither of us, *ſee* one another's *Thoughts*, or diſcover to others, how *Clear* they are, which is *your* Way; both ſides will ſtill remain as far from *Conviction*, and the Point from *Deciſion*, as at firſt, for any thing *your Rule* helps either of us. And, if we ſet aſide Propoſitions and Diſcourſes, and the ſhewing that their Terms are *Undeniably Connected*, and therefore, Themſelves *certainly True*; (which is *not your Way*;) how, I beſeech you, ſhall Men ever come to a *Final Concluſion* by dint of *Reaſon*, without being put to it to *avail* themſelves by *Ill Words*, and *Paſſion*; which (I fear, by proceeding upon your Rule; for, you pretend not to have produced any *Connexion of Terms*) has been ſuch a Stickler, of late, to uphold the *Carteſian* Cauſe?

34. This ſeem'd to me ſo Odd a Procedure, that I begg'd the Favour of you, to acquaint me, *how*, or by *what* Means, you would make *others* know you had, indeed, this Clear and Diſtinct Perception; or, how you could

prove

prove you had it, but by making uſe of *Propoſitions* and *Diſcourſes*; the Force of which conſiſts only in *Affirming*, *Denying*, or *Inferring*; that is, in the *Connexion*, or *Inconnexion* of the Terms. As I remember, your Anſwer was, by *Explicating* to them clearly the Point, and deſiring them to *Meditate* upon it: Which Way you ſeem'd to magnifie very much. I could have alledg'd, that you could not have propos'd, or us'd, even *this* Way, without making uſe of *Propoſitions*, and *Diſcourſes*: But, letting you proceed, I barr'd *Explications*, if they were brought (as it here ſeem'd) to evacuate any Need of *Proof*: For, *Explicating*, as contradiſtinguiſh'd to *Proving*, amounts to no more but a kind of *Rhetorical Perſuaſive*, made up of *Similitudes*, *Parallels*, *Alluſions*, and ſuch little ſorts of light, Witty Fancies, which may ſerve, and are made uſe of, in a manner, *equally*, to abet *Errour*, as well as *Truth*. Indeed, if the *Terms* of the Queſtion be *Dubious*, Explications are needful, and very requiſite; leſt, otherwiſe, we level our Argument at a wrong *Theſis*: But, if the Point in queſtion be rightly underſtood

ſtood by both Parties, it muſt either be *Prov'd*, if it be not *Self-evident* and *needs no Proof*; or, it muſt remain for ever *Uncertain*, and *Undecided*. A ſhould be glad to know whether, or no, you would go about to convince ſuch a Man by *Grounds* and *Principles*? If you ſay, *you would*, and that you think *you can do this*: then you wrong your Cauſe exceedingly, by waving the Mention of ſuch *Strong Supports* as *Principles* and *Grounds*; and Recurring to, and Relying on ſuch Unſteady, Feeble *Reeds* as *Explications*. If you ſay, you *cannot* evince your Theſis by *Principles*; then all your *Explications*, tho' never ſo Witty, are, confeſſedly, *Unprincipl'd*, and *Groundleſs*. If you pretend, your Explications do *involve* Proofs in them; 'tis clearly for the Intereſt of your Cauſe, to make uſe of the *Argumentative* part of ſuch Diſcourſes, and leave out the *Explicative*: For, 'tis certain, that the Argument, if a good one, ſubſiſts upon ſome Solid *Principle*; whereas, an Explication may be without *any at all*. It will therefore, to any conſidering Man, be a ſtrong Prejudice againſt the *Carteſians*, and make Men

apt to think they have *no* Grounds or Principles *at all*, that they do not much *pretend* to them, much leſs *build* their Diſcourſes on them, or *reduce* them to them; but ſeem to *abdicate* them, while they place their chief Support in *Explications*. In a Word; Let the Poſition be firſt *Prov'd* to be *True*, or all *Explications* are *Frivolous*: For, to what purpoſe is it to ſtand Explicating a *Falſhood*? The nature of all Explications, is, to give us the *Senſe* of the *Theſis* propos'd; but, let it be firſt *Prov'd*, and *Seen* that it bears *good Senſe*; for, 'tis a very ſleevleſs Task, to ſtand *Explicating Nonſenſe*.

35. On this Occaſion, it were not amiſs to note here a certain manner of Writing, very frequent amongſt ſome Modern Philoſophers; which is apt to lead the Generality of Learners into very great Errours. We do, all of us, naturally affect *Knowledge*; and therefore, we love to read Authors that are *Clear*, or write *clearly*; as being very *Knowable*, or *Intelligible*. But, now, *Clearneſs* is of *Two* ſorts: The *one* makes Clear the *Thoughts of the Writer*; The *Other* makes Clear the *Truth of the Point* he

he writes of. The *One* expresses clearly his *own Meaning*, when he says thus: The *Other* manifests clearly, that he *says True* when he says thus. The Former is perform'd by means of *Rhetorick*, and *Witty Expressions*: The Other can only be done by *Solid Principles*, and by *True Logick*. But, it too often happens, that those Readers who have not a Strong Bent to see Truth, and, with a steady Aim, pursue it, and *It only*, are so well appay'd with the Clear Expression of an Author, in delivering his *own Mind*; which cannot but be very Pretty, and Taking, being, generally, neatly clad; that they are, at unawares, Decoy'd to think the *Thing* it self is Clear, when 'tis only the *Sentiment* of the Author which is render'd so Evident; especially, if there be also some *slight Shew* of Coherence; which seldom wants, if the Writer be a Man of Parts. And, yet, perhaps, all this while, were that Discourse strip'd of its Superficial Gayity, and sounded to the bottom, nothing will be found to support its *Truth*; but it will appear Plain Bald Nonsense *en cuerpo*. On the other side, it lights so, that Discourses

that are *Solid*, and built all along on *Evident Principles*, (only which can clear the *Truth of the Point*,) do want the *other* ſort of Clearneſs, which conſiſts in *Explicating*, to recommend them to the Liking of the Reader. And this happens for *Two* Reaſons: One, becauſe *Principles* do conſiſt of *Few* Words, or Notions; and thoſe too, ſuch as are *General*, or *Univerſal* ones; which do not admit ſuch varying the Phraſe, or Smooth Explications, to make them *more Knowable*; their Clearneſs conſiſting only in the *greater Simplicity* of thoſe General Terms, and their *Cloſe Connexion*. The Second Reaſon is, that thoſe Writers who endeavour to look *deep* into the *Foundation* and *Principles* on which Truth is *Grounded*, and are not ſatisfy'd with *Skimming* over Queſtions *ſuperficially*, do not care to avail themſelves by *Explications*, and the Way of *Smooth Expreſſions*; but quite *diſ-regard* them, and judge them only *Luke-warm Words* in their preſent Circumſtances; becauſe they neither conduce to the Attainment of Science, nor to *Settle* and Clear the *Truth of the Theſis*; which ſuch

ſuch Men ſee can only be done by the *Strict* and *Evident Connexion* of their Notions. To apply this Diſcourſe; I intreat you, Sir, to conſider whether the Former Sort of Clearneſs be not that which the *Carteſians* affect; the *Second*, that which we take, and purſue. I ſhall hope, that whoever peruſes my METHOD to SCIENCE, with an Attentive and Indifferent Eye, will eaſily obſerve, that I firſt put my *Theſis*, and then endeavour to eſtabliſh it by *rigorous Proofs*, drawn from the Nature of the *Thing* or *Subject* treated of in thoſe reſpective Places: And that the *Carteſians* do not uſe to take any ſuch Method, but place their Hopes of recommending their Tenets to the Reader's Approbation, in their *Explications*. Which makes it ſo difficult for a Logician to find where their Arguments *lie hid*, or where they *preſs*; of which, with juſt Reaſon, I ſo often complain.

36. Thus much concerning your Method of *Proving* by *Explicating*; or rather, of *ſubſtituting* Explications in the place of *Proofs*. As for the other part of your Method, which is, your

putting Learners to *Meditate* long and ſeriouſly, upon what you have pro. pos'd to them, I lik'd that as ill as I did that of *Explicating*: And, my Reaſon is, becauſe, unleſs Men take *Principles* along with them, to guide their Thoughts *right*, and keep an Attentive Eye to them, while they thus *Meditate*; 'tis to be fear'd, their long *Meditating* will, by its *frequent Dints*, ſo *imprint* and *fix* what you have told them, in their Brain; and, at length, make it *ſink* ſo *deep* into their Minds, that, whether it be Right or Wrong, it will *ſtick* there, as daily Experience ſhews us; Cuſtom, a *Second Nature*, having a very powerful Aſcendent over the Underſtanding, to imbue us with *Falſe* Impreſſions, by the *oft-reiterated* Thinking upon any Point that is Diſputable; eſpecially, Ingenious Explications (as was ſhewn lately) too often ſerving for Reaſons, to thoſe who are not well vers'd in *True Logick*.

37. But, the main Objection I make, is, That this Method of yours quite *overthrows* the *Rule of Truth*, which you intended to eſtabliſh by it. For, this

this *Rule* being that, upon which all all our *Knowledge of Truth* depends, muſt be ſo very Clear of it ſelf, above any thing we can add to its *Higheſt Evidence*, that it cannot poſſibly need any *Explication*, nor *Meditation* neither. Nor, conſequently, can any ſtronger Argument be brought, to Demonſtrate that this Rule of yours is not the *Right* one, than 'tis to confeſs or pretend that it ſtands in *need* of, or, even, can *admit* Aſſiſtance, or Light, either from the one, or the other. For, if it can need any *Explication*, it follows, that it muſt be ſomething *Obſcure*: And, if it can need *Poring* and *Meditating* upon it, ere it be *admitted*, or can be *known*, then 'tis far from being *moſt Self-evident*: Both which utterly *deſtroy* the Nature of *ſuch a Rule*. For, ſince we muſt know *all other* Truths *by It*, its Evidence muſt be the *Firſt* Thing to be known; and therefore, the Knowledge of *its* Truth muſt antecede the Knowlege of all *other* Truths whatſoever, and be *Clearer* than They. Which being ſo manifeſt, I wonder what Thoughts or Conſiderations our *Explicating* or *Meditating* can

ſuggeſt, that can do this Firſt *Rule of Truth* any Service, or give it any Advantage; ſince, all others being *more Obſcure* than *It*, they may, indeed, (could they affect it,) impart to it their own *greater Obſcurity*, and make it *leſs Clear* and *Intelligible* than it was; but, can never make it *Clearer*, as having no *greater*, but *far leſs* Clearneſs themſelves. Laſtly, As this pretended Neceſſity of *Explicating*, and *Meditating*, quite degrades *yours* from being the *Genuin*, *Firſt*, and, conſequently, the *Right* Rule of Knowing Truth; ſo it *abets ours*, and gives it a Clear Title to be *ſuch a Rule*, ſince the *Self-evidence* of thoſe *Firſt Truths*, expreſs'd by Identical Propoſitions, (which is *our* Rule,) is ſuch, as is both Impoſſible to be *Explicated*, and Impoſſible to need *Meditating*, to clear it to us; but, at the firſt Inſtant we open the Eye of our Mind, it *diſcovers it ſelf fully* to all Mankind, to be *moſt True*; and, withall, *begets*, *forces* and *fixes* us in a Full and Firm *Aſſent* to its Verity.

38. Perhaps it will be alledg'd, notwithſtanding what I have ſaid above, That this Clear and Diſtinct Perception

is

is not pretended to be a Rule of Truth *in it self*, so that it establishes Truth Fundamentally; but of Truth *to us*, or, (as the Schools phrase it,) *quoad nos*; that is, a Rule whereby *we may know* what's Truth, what not: And, it seems, that it cannot be deny'd to be *such* a Rule, in regard 'tis Evident that we *must* Assent, or hold a Thing *True*, when we see clearly and distinctly *it is so*; nor ought we to *Assent*, or *hold it to be True*, unless we do clearly and distinctly see it *to be so*. I answer, That this Pretence is already fore-stalled, in divers places of my former Discourse; where it was shewn, by many Instances, that, even in the Opinions Learned Men held, this Guiding our Thoughts and Judgments by what appears to us a Clear and Distinct Perception, is Uncertain, and Fallacious. Whence, in the Thesis constituting this to be your *Rule*, there is tacitly involv'd a False Supposition; *viz.* That that *Perception*, on which we solely rely, is *Unmistakable* by us: For, if we may *mistake* it to be *really* a Perception thus qualify'd, when it *is not*, then our Assent may be Erroneous; and, how can

an Erroneous Judgment, in any Senſe, be *True to me*, or make *us know* a Thing to be True? If I am to draw a ſtraight Line, and the Rule by which I guide my ſelf be ſometimes *Straight*, and ſometimes *Crooked*, how is it a RULE *to me*, in that Action, or Draught? 2. In conſtituting this Perception to be your Rule, you begin *at the wrong End*: For, ſeeing this Perception is an *Act*, and that the Object ſpecifies every Act, and makes it *ſuch as it is*; the *Object*, or Thing, muſt be True *in it ſelf*; and, by being *in it ſelf* True, it *thence* makes our Judgment (when we rightly conceive it) to be *True alſo*. This Diſtinction, then, in our preſent Caſe, is altogether *Frivolous*; and the alledging it, *Prepoſterous*. 3. *To Perceive*, is an Act of the *Underſtanding*, and the ſame as *To Know*; and, to *Perceive Clearly and Diſtinctly*, is the ſame as *to know perfectly*. Whence follows, that to ſay, [I *know* that to be True, which I clearly and diſtinctly *Perceive* to be *ſo*,] is the very ſelf-ſame Senſe, as to ſay, [What I *know* to be True, I *know* to be True;] or, [I *know what I know*:] Which is a good

good Confident Saying; and, moreover, *True* too. But, nothing can be more ridiculous, than to make *Knowing* the *Rule* of Knowing, or a Rule to make a Thing *True to us*. To say, [A Thing *is*, because *it is*;] or, [I *know it*, because I *Know it*;] is more like a *Woman*'s Reason, when she is *Fix'd*, and *Wilful*; than a *Rational Man*'s, or a Philosopher's.

39. The Ingenious Mr. *Le Grand* seems to go more charily to work, by putting his Rule of Truth, (*Dissert. pag.* 86.) in these Terms, [*Illud omne Verum est quod clarè & distinctè percipitur.*] He does not say, [*quod percipitur esse Verum*;] but barely, [*quod percipitur.*] Which Words do not tell us, whether he speaks of our *Perception* by the First Operation of our Understanding, *simply Apprehending a Thing*; or of the *Second*, which is express'd by a *Proposition*. But, this still falls into the same: For, if he means the Former, then, since Simple Apprehensions have neither Truth nor Falsity in them, being no more but, barely, what's *meant*, or signify'd, by the *Words*; it cannot follow, that what I *clearly and distinctly*

distinctly thus perceive, is therefore *True*: For, I simply apprehend, and this clearly and distinctly too, the Meaning of these Words, [A Triangle has four Corners;] yet tis far from being *True*, being a plain *Contradiction*. He must mean then, that I am to perceive the Sense or Meaning of those Words to be *Connected*, which is done by putting them into a *Proposition*; and then his Rule must run thus, [Whatever Simple Apprehensions I see clearly and distinctly to be *Connected* in a Proposition, that *Proposition* is *True*:] Which is that very Rule which we advance, and the *Cartesians* would avoid. Only, we say, That to make this a Rule, we must see the Parts of it *Self-connected*, or *Self-evident*; for, all other Connexions are made, by the Terms being Connected by means of a *Third*; which is the same as to be *Deduced*, or *Prov'd*. But, these Connexions being, all of them, *Conclusions*, they cannot pretend to be *Rules*, or *Principles*, since they must depend on such *Rules*, as shew those Conclusions *must follow*. Again, If he means, (as he must, if he means any thing,) that his Rule is, That we must

must see those Simple Apprehensions, which we call the *Terms*, Connected in a *Proposition*; then we must see, or clearly *perceive*, that that Proposition is *True*: And then, his Principle must run thus; [*Whatever Proposition I clearly and distinctly perceive to be True, is known by me to be True*:] Wherefore, since to *perceive* thus, is, to *know*; and that, as appears by *Cartesius*'s Words, there cited, he speaks of what's *Verum mihi*, as the Effect of his Principle; that is, of what I *know* to be True; join these two together, and this Principle, or Rule, does manifestly amount to this; [*That which I know to be True, I know to be True*;] which is a most prodigious *Rule* of Knowledge; and yet, this is most evidently the Sense of it, in case to *Perceive* means, to *know*; and *Verum mihi* means that which *I know to be True*: which, I think, is Undeniable by any Man of Common Sense. And, I wonder how the Great Wit of *Cartesius* could imagin that any thing could be True to *Him*, unless he first saw it to be True *in it self*, which it has from its *Grounds*; unless he makes account, that a Thing may be

True

True to him, which, *in it self*, is *False*: Which makes those two Truths *fall out*, and *contradict* one another, which I ever took to be very good Friends. This makes me wish that the Ingenious Mr. *Le Grand*, who tells us here, *p.* 92. that there goes more to a *Rule*, than to a *Truth*, had told us, in what a *Truth*, and in what the Nature of a *Rule* consists; which we plainly deliver, by affirming that a Truth consists in the Connexion of the main Parts (or Terms) of any *Thesis*; and a Rule in the *Self-Connexion* of them, by Formal Identity; whence, such Rules become *Self-evident* to all Mankind, and able to *impart* their Light to all other Truths whatever. But, this shews the Genius of the *Cartesian* Writers: They take what's *uppermost*, and descant very prettily and gentilely upon it; which, being Obvious, and Facil, does mightily please the Fancy of the Readers: But, they go not to the Bottom of any Question. They *rake* the *Surface* of the most *Difficult* Points; but they never *dig deep* into it, to find out the *Ground* and *Foundation* on which Truth is *built*. And, I hope, the Reasons I have

have alledg'd, both here, and elsewhere, will satisfie my Readers, that it is not the ridiculous Motive of Pique, or Humour, which makes me give this Character of their Way of Writing; but, meerly, the Duty I owe to Truth, which obliges me to do it.

Thus, worthy Sir, I have us'd the best Reason I was Master of, in examining exactly, and understanding rightly, your *Rule of Truth*; and I have endeavour'd to stop all the Starting-holes, by which the *Cartesians* may think to evade the Force of my Arguments. Which done, I presume I may take my leave of this Point, and apply my Discourse to what follow'd next at our Interview.

40. My Design, at the beginning of our Conference, was to convince you, that Truth consisted in the *Connexion of the Terms*, in those Speeches we call'd *Propositions*; which evinc'd, I made account I could easily prove, that the *very First Truths*, which were to give Light to all others, or be the *Rule of Truth*, were such Propositions as were *Self-connected*, and therefore

fore *Self-evident*. How your over-acute way of *Doubting* defeated my Intentions, and ſtop'd my Progreſs, is ſeen above. Sorry to have been put out of that *Direct Road*, which I ſaw was the only *Right* one, and without ſettling which, all our Diſcourſe would be *Unconnected Talk* to no purpoſe, I was caſting about how to get into it again. But a Learned and Judicious Friend of ours, who was preſent, ſuggeſted, that [*Cogito ergo ſum*] was pretended by you to be a *Firſt Principle*; and, he preſt earneſtly it might be thorowly examin'd, that we might ſee whether it had in it the nature of a *Firſt Principle*, or no. I was ſomething troubled to relinquiſh the Method I had prefix'd to my ſelf; without which, I ſaw, the Nature of a *Firſt Principle* could not be ſettled, nor ſhewn: However, I yielded to his Requeſt. I allow'd then, that [*Cogito ergo ſum*] was a *True* and *Evident Conſequence*, as are a thouſand ſuch others, *viz. Dabito ergo ſum; Scribo, ambulo, dormio*; nay, *Somnio ergo ſum, &c.*) which is what, with Unattentive Conſiderers, give it all its Credit, and

makes

makes them look upon us, as Unreasonable Men, who, as they apprehend, do question this Consequence, or call it into Doubt. But they are quite mistaken; there is no Body that doubts it is an *Evident Consequence*; but, there is a very wide Difference between a *Consequence* and a *Principle*; or rather, if it be a *Consequence*, tho' never so good, it can never be a *First Principle*, because, the Premisses, which induced that Consequence, were before it; and that Truth, on which all force of Consequence is grounded, (as was noted above,) is before either of them. What we affirm then is, that it is not a *First Principle*, nor could be so to *Cartesius*, when he propos'd, and made use of it as such: And I addrest my self, to show it had not in it, the *nature* of *such* a *Principle*, nor could, with *Reason*, be pretended such by *Cartesius* himself.

41. To prove this, I alledg'd, that it is an Inseparable Property, or rather, Essential to *First Principles*, that they must manifest themselves, to be such by their own *most perfect Self-Evidence*; whereas *Cartesius* was forc'd to use very

very *many* prolix *Antecedent Diſcourſes*, to prove all elſe to be *Dubitable*; and, *becauſe* they were ſo, he went on, Enquiring farther, till he could find ſomething that *could not be Doubted*; which, he conceiv'd, was [*Cogito ergo ſum,*] from which he came to *Conclude*, that this was the *Firſt Prineiple*. Whence I alledg'd, that therefore, thoſe *Antecedent Diſcourſes* of his, which prov'd all elſe to be Doubtful, were the *Reaſons* or *Arguments* whence he drew his *Concluſion*, that *this* was the *Firſt Principle*. Now, I think this as Plain Reaſon as plain can be, that No Man can evince a thing to be the *Firſt* in any kind whatever, but, becauſe, there is nothing *before* it in that kind. And, from this conſideration, I prove my Allegation clearly; becauſe, had not thoſe *many* and *large* Antecedent Diſcourſes, to prove *all elſe* to be *Doubtful*, been *True*; his *Concluſion*, *viz.* that [*This is the Firſt Principle,*] could not have follow'd, or been *True* neither. For, in caſe the *Senſes* had not been thus *Fallacious* as ſtill to deceive us, perhaps, Science might have been had from the *Things without us* affecting thoſe

thoſe Senſes; nor had there been any need to recur to the Operations of our own *Mind*, to ſeek for the *Ground* of all Truth *there*, becauſe, we might have had it from the *Things in Nature*. This being ſo, how many Propoſitions did he uſe all along, to prove that our Senſes might *all decieve us*; that we know not certainly whether we *ſleep* or *wake*; that Mathematical Demonſtrations might be all Erroneous, *&c.* All which Antecedent Propoſitions, by the plain Rules of Logick, ought to be *more Evident*, and *more Certain*, than the Concluſion he gather'd, or inferr'd thence, *viz.* that Therefore *This*, and only *This*, being Indubitable, and Certainly Known, is the *Firſt Principle*. Add, that this being *Plain Senſe*, his own Diſcourſe *overthrows* the Eſtabliſhment of his *Firſt Principle*. For, ſince he *had* not this *Firſt Principle* of his till he had *found* it, nor did he *find* it, till he found all elſe to be Doubtful; it will be ask'd *How*, and in virtue of *What* Firſt Principle he became, while he was in queſt of it, *more Certain*, that all *other* things were *Doubtful*, than he was of the *Concluſion*.

ſion he inferr'd thence, *viz.* that [*Cogito, ergo ſum*] being impoſſible to be Doubted of, was his Firſt Principle. Wherefore, if he guided himſelf by no *Indubitable*, or Firſt Principle all along, in thoſe Antecedent Diſcourſes, which were in reality his Premiſſes; that *Concluſion* of his, cannot in any Logick *follow*, nor be *Certainly True*, nor ought to be Embrac'd; eſpecially, by ſuch a Philoſopher as *he* was, who *profeſſes* Doubting of ever thing, till he came at his Firſt Principle, that can be *in the leaſt* Dubitable.

42. In Reply to this Diſcourſe of mine, which is grounded on the Suppoſition, that *Carteſius* guided himſelf by *Reaſon*, in ſettling his Firſt Principle; and on the *plaineſt Rules* of Logick that the Premiſſes muſt be *Clearer* than the *Concluſion*; the former of which, I ſuppoſe you will grant, the latter is obvious to Common Senſe; you brought an Ingenious *Explication*, by way of *Similitude*, or *Parallel*; which, I ſee, are to ſupply the place of *Arguments*, and *Anſwers* too, in the *Carteſian* way. It was this. "Suppoſe "I ſee a Man making great *Holes* in

"in the Ground, or throwing aſide "*Rubbiſh*; and that I aſk him what he "is doing? He tells me, he has an In- "tention to *Build*, and to lay *Founda-* "*tions* for that End, and is making "Way for it. Now this Action of his "looks like an idle buſineſs, if we con- "ſider it *alone*; but, if we regard his "*farther* Intention of Building, it is a "Wiſe and Neceſſary Preparative. And "yet this Antecedent Action, of pre- "paring to lay a Foundation, does "not give ſtrength to the Building, "which is an Action quite different "from it; but the *Building* depends on "the Foundation it ſelf, and on no- "thing elſe. And, therefore, it fol- "lows, by way of Parallel, that the "Antecedent Diſcourſes of *Carteſius*, "need not be *Connected* with that Firſt "Principle, as *Premiſſes*, to *infer* it "*muſt* be ſuch; ſince they ſerv'd on- "ly to remove the *Rubbiſh*, or the "Pretended Knowledge of Things "by means of the *Senſes*, which en- "cumber'd the Mind with Prepoſſeſ- "ſions; and, ſo to *make way* to lay "that *Firſt Foundation of Science*. I think I have done your Parallel all the

Right

Right you can expect: Wherefore, I come now to examine what *Force* it bears, and what *Strength* ſuch a *way of Diſcourſing* has in it; which, I the rather do, that I may inform thoſe Readers, who take ſuch kind of *Similitudes* for *Reaſons*, how eaſily, and how frequently they are *deluded*, by ſuch *Unſteady*, *Inconcluſive*, and *Illogical* Methods.

43 Firſt then, 'tis ſo certainly known, that Similitudes do not uſe *quadrare per omnia*, or, (as they ſay,) *run on four Feet*, that it is grown *Proverbial*; which lays a great prejudice upon that Way in common. 2. Similitudes drawn from *Material* Things, *to Immaterial*, are particularly liable to this Defect. They may, indeed, oft times, ſerve to *illuſtrate* ſome Truth, as *fit Metaphors* to ſute with our *Fancy*; but then they preſuppoſe the Truth, which they are to *illuſtrate*, to be *known* ſome *other* Way. Whence, unleſs this be done firſt, all they can do is to explicate we *know not what*, which deſtroys the nature of an *Explication*; for, Explications are not intended to *put* the *Truth* of the Point, but *ſuppoſe* it. 3. All

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the Actions of our Soul are, or ought to be *Rational*; and have a *Dependence* on one another, by the way of *Reason* gathering *Subsequent* Truths from those which *preceded*. Now, I think, 'tis impossible to be contested by any Man who has read *Carteſius*'s *Meditations*, but that his Discourses which anteceded his finding out this *First Principle* of his, are reducible to this *Enthymem*; [For these and these *Reasons*, there can no Certainty be had, as to Speculative Knowledges, by any Information had from *Outward* Objects affecting the *Senses*; therefore, it ought to be sought for in some *Interiour* Act of our *Mind*, which is most Comprehensive and Peculiar to it,] which he concieved was *Cogitation*; and thence he laid this First Principle: [*Cogito ergo sum*] Which being so, it follows necessarily, that the Laying this for his First Principle, depended on the Goodness of the *Reasons* he had, why our Senses were not to be trusted, nor could give us our First Notions; whence, by reflecting on their Metaphysical Verity, we might have those Self-evident, and First Truths, of ours. This,

I ſay, was evidently the Tenour of his Diſcourſe; becauſe, did not thoſe Reaſons of his, againſt the *Sufficiency* of our *Senſes* to give us this Information, conclude; but that, notwithſtanding all thoſe Reaſons could prove, the Senſes might ſtill imprint on our Mind thoſe Firſt Notions, his *Conſequent* would not have follow'd: Nor, could he have had any Ground for recurring to the *Interiour Act* of Cogitation, for his Firſt Principle, in regard it had been given to his Hand by means of the *Senſes*, as was now declar'd. 4. It being then evident, that the *Subſtance* of thoſe antecedent Diſcourſes was *ſumm'd up* in the *Enthymem* now mention'd, 'tis manifeſt, that this Explication of yours *falters* in the *main* Particular, in which it ought to *ſute*, and *reſemble*. For, in caſe thoſe Impreſſions on our Mind could have been made by means of the Senſes, as aforeſaid; then thoſe Impreſſions, or Notions, being the *Immediate Foundation*, on which is *built* all our Knowledge, could not be call'd, or reſembl'd to *Rubbiſh*; nor compar'd to a *Hole*, to *lay* the *Foundation*; for, the *Holes* were already

already made in those *Inlets*, our *Senses*; which were Pervious to the *Effluviums* affecting the *Seat of Knowledge*; and thence, the *Soul*. So that your Similitude is, in effect, the *Begging* the whole *Question*; and can have no Force at all, but by our *Granting* it; which, I see plainly, we shall never have Reason to do. Rather, unless this *Petitio Principii* (which is tacitly involv'd in this Parallel) be *yielded* by us, or *prov'd* by you, it makes against your selves. For, by *Denying* all such certain Information from the Senses, you will be found, not to *remove the Rubbish*, in order to *lay the Foundation*; but, to *stop up* the *Way* to the *laying any*; and, to *damm* up all the *Holes*, by which the *Materials* could come into our *Minds*, where only such a *Foundation* could have been *laid*. At least, you see, your Explication amounts to *nothing*; and, that your Similitude is *lame* in all its Legs, and has not *one Sure Foot* to stand on. Which will, I hope, sufficiently inform others, that this Way of *Explicating*, so mightily affected by *Cartesius*, and his Followers, is utterly Insignificant. I shall hope too,

that this Paper will light into the hands of ſome Readers, who are ſo Intelligent, as to diſcern, that this *Explicative* Way is taken up, to avoid the Way of *Rigorous Proof*; which is ſo Unfriendly to a Doctrine that wants Principles.

44. Whence I ſhould give this Advice to all *Ariſtotelians*, that whenever the *Carteſians* would obtrude upon them their Ingenious *Explications*, they would demand of them ſmartly, by what Grounds they *know*, or will *prove* to *others*, that what they *explicate*, is **True**; without doing which in the *firſt* place, *no Explication* ought to be admitted. It may ſerve for a kind of *Currying Favour* with *weaker Underſtandings*; but it can never *improve* any Intelligent Man in *Solid Knowledge*, nor make him one Jot the *Wiſer*.

45. After this, we came to argue that other Objection of mine, That *Firſt Principles*, of all others, muſt be *moſt* Clearly and Diſtinctly *Known*; becauſe they ought to be, of all others, *moſt Knowable*; there being no others *before* them, by means of which they might come to be *better Known*. Now,

Cartesius himself expresly confesses, that, when he had found this First Principle, *he did not yet sufficiently understand what* [*Ego*,] the *Subject* in that Principle, *meant*: Whence I inferr'd, that therefore, [*Cogito ergo sum*,] could not be to him a *First Principle*. This is enforc'd, because the *Subject* is the *Principal*, and *most Substantial* Part in every Proposition: And, since, in *ordinary* Things, when we do not well know *what we talk of*, plain Sense tells us, 'tis a Folly to talk *at all*; *much more* is it Disallowable in *Philosophical* Matters, where *Exact Truth* is aim'd at; and *most* of all in *First Principles*, which must be *most Self-evident*. You seem'd to think an *Obscure* Knowledge of the *Subject* was sufficient. But, how an *Obscure* Knowledge can be either *Clear*, or *Distinct*; much less, *superlatively such*: Or, how a Proposition, whose *Principal Part* is neither *Clear*, nor *Distinct*, should, notwithstanding, it self, (as here it must,) be *most* Clear *and* Distinct, is, I believe, past any Man's Comprehension.

46. However, I let your smooth Explication *slide*, without *pressing* my

Diſcourſe too forcibly: For, it had been ſomething Rude, at ſo Civil a Viſit in my own Chamber, to puſh Things forward too rigorouſly; or, to ſeem to affect the Victory of a *Confutation.* But our Friend urg'd me to bring ſome one Argument, that might deciſively conclude the Point. It came into my Mind, (waving what I had objected elſewhere,) to alledge againſt it, that *A Firſt Principle* muſt be ſome *One* Determinate Propoſition; whereas it was Evident that this Principle of yours had in it *Two*, and thoſe very *Different* ones. For, [*Cogito*] is a *Speech that Affirms*, which Logicians call a *Propoſition*; and *involves* in it all the *Three* Parts that compleat ſuch a Speech, being clearly the ſame as [*Ego ſum Cogitans*;] as [*Sum*,] for the ſame Reaſon, *implies*, [*Ego ſum Exiſtens*;] which is evidently a Propoſition too, and *Diſtinct* from the *other*. Your Anſwer was, That, notwithſtanding the manner of Expreſſion, they made, or amounted to but *One* Propoſition; and ſignify'd no more but [*Ego ſum re Cogitans*.] But I reply'd, That this was the *Firſt* Propoſition; and hence I a k,

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What becomes of the *Later*, [*Ego sum Existens,*] since the Predicate [*Existens,*] is a quite different Notion from the Predicate [*Res Cogitans.*] Add, that to *prove* himself *Existent*, was the sole Scope *Carteſius* aim'd at in laying this Principle; as appears by his Words immediately following; *viz.* [*Nondum tamen ſatis intelligo quiſnam ſim Ego ille qui jam neceſſario ſum.*] He does not pretend to have evinc'd that he was *Res Cogitans*, but only *neceſſarily Exiſtent*. To enforce this the more, I alledg'd, that the *Illative* Particle [*Ergo*] did ſhew plainly, that there were *Two* Propoſitions; of which, the One was an *Antecedent*; the Other, a *Conſequent*. But you would not allow that [*Ergo,*] in that place, had an *Illative* Signification; nor, as far as I could diſcern, *any at all*; for, I am ſure, if it has *any*, it can have *no Other*. I remember, you beſtirr'd your Wit as dexterouſly as any Man could in ſuch a Cauſe, to bring off *Carteſius*; but 'tis beyond the Power of Wit, or Art, to do it, unleſs the moſt pregnant and ſignificant Words which Rational Creatures *can* uſe, muſt, *for his ſake*, loſe their Sig-

nification. Which is such an Injury to the rest of Mankind, who would be at a strange Loss to *discourse* or *understand* one another, were this admitted, that it will never be allow'd by other Philosophers, who are *Dis-interessed*, and have not that *Passionate Concern* for *Cartesius*, as some others seem to have. I remember, Mr. *Le Grand* tells us, he has spoke to some Exceptions made against this Principle formerly, and, perhaps, this may be one of them. But, as I could not light on that Book of his, so I clearly see, this Particular is so manifest, that 'tis impossible for any Man, in such a Case as this, to answer to the purpose.

47. And thus ended our Discourse; In which, if you had any Disadvantage, it proceeded hence, that you would needs undertake to defend *Cartesius's Logick*: Whereas, nothing is more Evident, than that, in the far greatest part of his *Meditations*, (not to speak of some other pieces of his,) he regarded no *Rules* of Logick *at all*; but meerly follow'd the Current of his own Ingenious Thoughts, in gliding smoothly and gentilely, from one Thing,

to

to another, as his First *Design* led him, and in putting his Conceptions *Clearly*; I mean, according to the *First* sort of *Clearness*, mention'd above, §. 35. The Summ is this; Without *Propositions*, we cannot *speak*; and, without *Illative* Particles, we cannot make use of our *Rationality*; both which, notwithstanding, you do not seem very willingly and heartily to admit. Had I been of your Party, I should have advis'd you to have flatly deny'd all *Syllogisms*, *Inferences*, *Antecedents*, *Consequents*; and, in a Word, *all Logick*, and *all* kind of *Connexion*; and then it had been impossible for any Man to Attack you, or bring any Argument *against you*; I add, nor you any *for your selves*.

48. The Generality of *Mankind* (I wish I might not say, of *Philosophers* too) being much govern'd by *Fancy*, I am to expect, such a High Speculation as is the foregoing Discourse, will scarce find a Civil Entertainment amongst such Gentlemen. However, I hope it will not displease them, if, on this Occasion, I ask them some few pertinent Questions; leaving the Re-

ſolving them to themſelves. 1. Whether there be not ſuch Propoſitions, as thoſe I call *Identical*? 2. Whether Mathematicians, and ſome others, who treat of Philoſophy in a Mathematical Method, have not propos'd ſuch before me, and made uſe of them? 3. Whether ſuch Propoſitions are not the *moſt-firmly-Grounded*, and the *Firſt* of all others? 4. Whether they are not *Self-evident*, and *force* the Aſſent of *all Mankind*? 5. Whether we can be *Deceiv'd* in *Judging* them Self-evident; as we may, and often are, in Judging that we *Clearly and Diſtinctly know a thing to be True*? 6. Whether they have not an Univerſal Influence, in their Way, over *all Truths*, eſpecially all *Deduced* Truths; ſince 'tis Demonſtrable, that all the *Force of Conſequence* is Grounded on them? 7. Whether, all theſe Qualifications being ſhewn to be found in the Self-evident Knowableneſs of Identical Propoſitions, this Cleareſt Light, or Intelligibility, which ſo neceſſarily appears in them, ought not, with juſt Right, entitle *Them* to be held the RULE by which to *know all other Truths*?

Laſtly,

Lastly, Whether this *Self-evident Connexion* of the Terms of a Proposition, found in *them*, which is *Producible openly*, be not a Clear Means to *shew to others*, that we do not *mistake* when we judge them *Self-evident*, and *True*; since all Mankind that *sees* them *Produc'd*, must think the *same* of them *we do*? And, whether, on the other side, it can possibly be shewn *to others*, that our selves do *Clearly and Distinctly know* a Thing to be *True*, without *producing finally* some Proposition that is *Unmistakable* and *Self-evident* to *Every* Man? When they have duly weigh'd each of these Particulars, and the Proofs brought for them, I appeal from their *Fancy*, to their *Reason*, whether I have not done a Just and Necessary Duty to Philosophy, in endeavouring to settle the *Rule of Truth* upon so *Solid* and *Evident* a Basis; and, whether I could have been less Speculative in such a High Subject, as requires a Deep Inspection into the very *Center* of all Truth whatever, even to the Resolving it *Finally* and *Connaturally*, into *Essential Truth* it self? If these Considerations do not *acquit* me upon

either Account, I cannot but think my ſelf *Unjuſtly Condemn'd*; and, I hope, the whole *Court* of Philoſophers, who are *Impartial*, and *Sincere*, will judge the ſame.

49. To clear me from *Singularity* in this Uncommon Method of Philoſophizing, I could farther alledge, that Mr. *Locke*, in his *Eſſay*, *B.* 4. *ch.* 1. §. 4. gives us this Doctrine; that *The Firſt Act of the Mind, is, to perceive its own Ideas; and, that One of them is not Another*; that is, that each of them *is its ſelf* only; which is an *Identical Propoſition*. —That *this is ſo Abſolutely Neceſſary*, that, *without it, there could be no Knowledge, no Reaſoning,—no Diſtinct Thoughts at all.* Which ſufficiently expreſſes it to be the *Firſt Truth*, or RULE of TRUTH, which influences *all other* Truths; ſince, without it, *nothing* at all could be *known*. —That *a Man* infallibly *knows that the Ideas of White, and Round, are the very Ideas they are.* —That *this is the Firſt Agreement, or Diſagreement*, (that is, the *Firſt Truth*,) *the Mind perceives in its Ideas.* —That *Men of Art have, for ready Application in all Caſes, reduc'd this into*

thoſe

thoſe General Rules, [*What is, is,*] *&c.* In all which, (as he does in divers other main Speculative Points,) he ſo perfectly agrees with me, that, tho' I did not proceed on *my own* Grounds, I need no more but theſe of *his*, to draw ſuch Immediate Conſequences thence, as would eſtabliſh and abet my *Theſis*. Indeed, it did not lie in the Way of that very Learned Man's Speculation, to reflect on the Univerſal Influence Identical Propoſitions have over *all Truths*, and *all Knowledges*, whatever; and therefore, his Diſ-like of them afterwards, (*chap.* 8.) can be thought to relate only to their apprehended *Uſeleſneſs*: Tho', even there, (§. 2.) he acknowledges an Excellent Uſe of them too; where he ſays, that [*What is, is,*] may ſerve *ſometimes*, (he might have ſaid, *Always when it needed,*) *to ſhew a Man the Abſurdity he is Guilty of, when, by Circumlocution, or Ambiguous Terms, he would, in particular Inſtances, deny the ſame Thing of it ſelf; becauſe no body will ſo openly bid Defiance to Common Senſe, as to affirm Viſible and Direct Contradictions, in plain Words.* To which Reflexion of his, if this

this Learned Gentleman pleaſes to add, That whoever diſcourſes *Falſe* on any Subject, does, at the ſame time, make that Subject *not to be what it is*, or (if the Queſtion be of ſome Mode) *as it is*; his Penetrative Judgment cannot but diſcern, that Identical Propoſitions are *Equally Uſeful* in *all* Queſtions, *all* Diſputes, nay, *all* Diſcourſes whatſoever, if the Way of *Reducing* Inferiour Truths to *Them*, were but well improv'd, and cultivated.

50. I much value your good Opinion; and, I perceiv'd, I was in danger of loſing it, by a hint you gave me, with a Diſ-reliſhing Air, that I call'd *Carteſius* a Fanatick; which you thought very harſh. In Anſwer, I deny the Charge. 'Tis one Thing to ſay, that, when *Carteſius* was laying his *Method to Science*, by denying his Senſes, and deveſting himſelf of all his former Knowledges, which (as my Author expreſſes it) was no leſs than to *Unman himſelf, he fell, for ſome few Days*, into a *Spice of Enthuſiaſm*; nay, was *brim-full of it*; and fancy'd he had *Viſions and Revelations*; ſo that he ſeem'd *Crack-brain'd*, or to have *drunk a Cup*

too much; which are the very Words a *Carteſian*, who wrote his Life, has given us, (*p.* 34, 35, 36.) And, 'tis another Thing to ſay, he was *habitually* a Fanatick, or Enthuſiaſt, *all his Life*, and in *every* Action he did, or Book he writ; the Former of which can neither be *deny'd* with *Truth*, nor the Later *objected* with any Degree of *Modeſty*: Nor does it ſute with the high Character I have given of him, in the *Preface* to my *Method*, and the *Encomiums* I have, upon Occaſion, beſtowed on divers of his Books. I beſeech you, Sir, be ſo Juſt, as to ſtate my Caſe right. I was writing a METHOD to SCIENCE, and two *other Methods*, (if, indeed, they do not fall into the *ſame*,) which look'd very Extravagant, did lie croſs my Way; which, unleſs I remov'd, my whole Deſign had been ſpoil'd, and of no Effect. I mean, that of *Malbranche*, which makes all *Humane Science* come by *Divine Revelation*: And, that of *Carteſius*, that we muſt deny all our Knowledge of Natural Truths, had by our *Senſes*. The ſettling this Later Method, had, confeſſedly, loſt *Carteſius* his Wits, for

ſome

ſome time; and therefore, I had good reaſon to fear, that the following the ſame Method might do a greater Miſchief to *others*, who had not ſuch *Strong Brains* as that Great Man had; of which too, there do not want Inſtances. The former *Method*, advanced by *Malbranche*, I ſaw evidently, brought a kind of *Fanaticiſm* into Philoſophy. For, I believe, no Man doubts, but that the Genius of *Fanaticks* is, to over-leap all *Humane Means*, and to pretend that their Light of Knowledge comes to them immediately from GOD. My Fault, then, only conſiſted in this, that I was ſuch a Friend to *Truth*, and to *Mankind*, as to endeavour (to my Power) to avert ſuch Miſchiefs from young Students, by fore-warning them of what had prejudic'd *others*, and therefore might highly prejudice *them*; and, to confute thoſe *Ways to Science*, that ſo directly thwarted *mine*, which, my beſt Judgment told me, was the *True one*. Now, this being a Task ſo *Unavoidable* to one in my Circumſtances; and the Confuting ſuch ſtrange Methods being, with good Reaſon, judg'd by

me

me to be so *Beneficial* to *others*, it cannot, without Rashness, be thought, I did this out of a Desire of *Opposing* other Learned Men; but, purely out of Duty to *my Reader*, and a just Regard to *my self*. Yet, for pursuing this Laudable and (in my Case) Necessary Intention, I am persecuted with the highest Malice, by two over-zealous *Cartesians*; who, to uphold these Awkward and Pernicious Methods, make no Scruple to break in upon the most Sacred Methods of Christianity; tho' I have done no more but cite the Words of their own Authors. Besides, every Candid Reader will, hence, easily discern, that it is not out of *Pique* against their *Persons*; but, purely, out of my *Dis-like* of their Unprincipl'd and Dangerous *Methods*, that I have oppos'd them *at all*. Nor have I any Personal Reflexions upon their *Morality*: Nor do I charge them with *Impiety*, but of *Folly*; which every Antagonist in Philosophical Debates is *forc'd* to object to his Adversary.

51. But, am I the only Man, of our Moderns here in *England*, who have thought it the Interest of *Philosophy*, and

and of *Truth*, to oppose *Malbranche* and *Cartesius*? Mr. *John Keyll*, of *Oxford*; a Person of Great Wit, and Greater Hopes, being (as I am informed) scarce arriv'd yet at the Summer of his Age, has lately put forth *An Examination of* Dr. Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*; where, after he had, in his Introduction, discover'd the Fopperies of divers of the Antient Philosophers; and of three of our Moderns, *Spinoza*, Dr. *More*, and Mr. *Hobbs*, not much less Ridiculous than the former; he lays open that superlatively absurd Opinion of *Malbranche*, which I noted above. He gives us a Summary, and Parallel Consequences, of his Doctrine in that particular; which is, That *We see not the* Things *themselves, but only their* Ideas, *which the Soul sees in* GOD: —And, that *there is no possibility of seeing* any *Bodies, except in that Being,* (GOD;) *which contains them after an Intelligible manner.* —*Bodies, therefore, and their Properties, are* (only) *seen in* GOD; *so that* (says he) *a Man who reads this Book, does not really see the Book it self, but the Idea of it, which is in* GOD. Which he deservedly characters,

racters, to be *Unintelligible Jargon*, and a *Solid piece of Nonſenſe*. He expoſes that equally ſenſeleſs Opinion, That *Bodies, of their own Nature, are neither heard, ſeen, ſmelt, nor taſted*; and, that *when, for Example, we* Taſte *any thing, the Body* Taſted *cannot produce any Savour in us; but* GOD *Almighty takes that Occaſion, to ſtir up that Senſation in us, to which the Body does not really concurr.* So that Mankind has, it ſeems, quite loſt its *Animality*; at leaſt, that we are not *Naturally Senſitive Creatures*, but only *Supernaturally*; or, by GOD's *Immediate* Power making us ſuch, every time we are to uſe our Senſes. He proceeds: *According to him, it is impoſſible for any Man to move his own Arm*; but, *when he is* Willing *to move it*, GOD *takes it, and moves it up and down, as the Man* Wills. *If a Rebellious Son, or Subject, murther his Father, or his Prince, by ſtabbing him, the Man himſelf does not thruſt the Poniard into his Father's or Prince's Breaſt, But* GOD *Almighty does it, without any other Concurrence of the Man, but his* Will. It ſeems, our Laws are very Unjuſt; which do not Hang Men for meerly

meerly *Intending*, or *Willing*; but for *Outward Acts*; in which the Man himself has no hand at all; they being, all of them, entirely of GOD's doing. Whence we see, that, with the *Carteſians*, ſuch Doctrine as this has *no Impiety* in it at all againſt GOD: It *comes* from *Them*, and ſo 'tis all *Sacred*. *He proceeds, and affirms that no Second Cauſes act: So that no Body, tho' mov'd with never ſo great a Velocity againſt another, can be able to drive that other before it, or move it in the leaſt; but* GOD **takes that Occaſion**, *to put it into Motion. At this rate, one need not fear his Head-piece, tho' a Bomb were falling upon it, with all the Force that Powder can give it; for, it would not ſo much as break his Skull, or ſinge his Hair, if* GOD *did not* **take that Occaſion** *to do it.* —*The moſt Natural Agents, with him, are not ſo much as Inſtruments, but only* **Occaſions** *of what is produc'd by them: So that a Man might freely paſs through the Fire, or jump down a Precipice, without any Harm, if* GOD *Almighty did not* **take that Occaſion** *to burn him, or daſh out his Brains.*

51. Coming to *Carteſius*, whom he calls *the Great Maſter and Deliverer of the Philoſophers, from the Tyranny of Ariſtotle; —and the Firſt World-Maker of our Century, he lays the Blame at his door*, of all this *preſumptuous Pride* of his Followers, and their Fantaſtick Philoſophy; and animadverts ſeverely upon divers of his odd *Placita*: As, that *there is always the ſame Quantity of Motion in the World. So that, if all the Men and Animals in the World were Moving, which moſt part of them can do when they pleaſe; yet, ſtill there would be no more Motion in the World, than there is in the Night-time, when they are at Reſt; and, what Motion they had when they were Moving, muſt be communicated to the Æther, when they are at Reſt.* And, whereas *Carteſius*'s Skill in Geometry gave thoſe Contrivances of his Witty Fancy all their Credit, this Author aſſures us, p. 14. that, *from the beginning to the end of his Principles, there is not one Demonſtration drawn from Geometry; or, indeed, any Demonſtration at all, except every Thing illuſtrated by a Figure be a Demonſtration; for, then, indeed, there may be enow of ſuch Demonſtrations*

ſtrations produc'd in his Philoſophical Works. Now, in caſe this be ſo, then, it ſeems, *Explications* by *Figures* do ſerve *Carteſius*, and his Followers, for *Demonſtrations* in *Geometry*, as well as *Explications* by *Words* ſerve them for *Demonſtrations*, or *Proofs*, in *other* Sciences. —He adds, that, *His great Fault was, that he made no Uſe at all of Geometry in Philoſophy.* —Nay, that *His whole Syſtem was but one continual Blunder, upon account of his Negligence in that Point.* —That Galileo *and* Kepler *have by the Help of Geometry, diſcover'd Phyſical Truths, more worth than all* Carteſius's *Volumes of Philoſophy.* He confutes his *Vortices*, by *Mr.* Newton's Principles; *who ſhews it impoſſible, upon many Accounts, that the Earth, and other Planets, ſhould move in a Vortex.* With which moſt Conſummate *Geometrician*, I believe, none of the *Carteſians* will be willing, or able, to grapple, or contend. And, were *Carteſius* now alive, perhaps he would have as much admir'd *Him*, as Himſelf, in his Life-time, was admir'd by *others*. —He ſubjoins, that, *His Notion of a Vortex being ruin'd, the whole* Carteſian *Syſtem muſt*

of

of necessity fall to the Ground: And that World, whose Origination he pretended to have deduced from Mechanical Principles, must be a wild Chimera of his own Imagination. He affirms, that Cartesius's *Discourse about the Motion of the Moon, is so notoriously False, that there is no Almanack-maker, but can demonstrate the contrary.* Farther, That the Cartesians *pretend to give a true Account of all the* Phænomena *in Nature; whilst they understand so very little, that they have not given us an Explication of any one Thing:* —And, that Cartesius *has blunder'd so much in the easiest, and most abstract Things in Nature, that of the Seven Rules he has given of the Laws of Motion, there is but One of them True.* Lastly, He affirms, that Cartesius's *Fancy of Making a World by Mechanical Principles, —has given the Ignorant Atheists (for, so are,* says he, *most of that Persuasion) some plausible Pretences for their Incredulity, without any Real Ground.* Where the the Parenthesis lays such a Blemish on the greater Part of the Followers of *Cartesius*, and on his Doctrine, as occasioning it: that, as I have charitably endeavour'd, in divers places, to wipe

off

off that Aſperſion, and have taken their part; ſo, I am ſorry to ſee now, that 'tis beyond my Power to do it. I muſt own, that there have been many Vertuous Perſons, *Carteſians*; but I am not ſo well vers'd in their Catalogue, as to know, whether *they*, or the *Atheiſts* of that Perſuaſion, do make the *Major Part*. Theſe are his preſent Objections againſt *Des Cartes*; and, by what I have read of this Learned Author, I know no Man more likely to make good what he has charged upon him, than *He* is.

53. You ſee, Sir, how much it behoves the *Carteſians* to *look to their Hit*, if they have any; and, to arm themſelves againſt ſuch brisk Attacks, tending to the Overthrow of all their Hypotheſis by way of *Geometry*; which I have attempted to do by way of *Logical*, *Phyſical*, and *Metaphyſical* Principles. For, if this *Oppoſition* to *Carteſius*, by *Geometrical* Arguments, ſhould come to be a *Confutation*; then, ſince Mr. *Le Grand* tells us, his *Phyſicks is but a Part of the Mathematicks*, his Credit, as a Philoſopher, will ſink utterly; as I am inform'd; the Eſteem of his Do-

ctrine

ctrine does, by large degrees, in *both* the Universities; or rather, it is quite *vanish'd* out of *one* of them already.

54. For my part, let them come off with the Geometricians as well as they can, I will not give them much Trouble; but, do sincerely declare, that if they can bring *any one Evident Principle*, either in Logick, Physicks or Metaphysicks, which they will vouch to have the Nature of a *Principle* in it; and *prove* that it abets any Point of *their* Doctrine, as 'tis distinguish'd from *ours*, I will cross the Cudgels for the next Comer, and promise, never to oppose them more. Fairer Offer was never made; nor any Method ever propos'd, that shews a greater Sincerity of the Proposer in pursuing Truth, nor that can be more *Decisive* of a Philosophical Contest, in which, *half a Sheet of Paper* will do the Business, as well as *whole Volumes*. You see, Sir, I allow my Adversaries *a large Field*; out of which they may please to *pick* and *cull* what they *like best*, or judge they can *best prove*. If they know of any thing that *grows there*, which will bear the Test, and can approve it self by

Principles,

Principles, to be an *Evident Truth*, they have Free Liberty, and a fair Occaſion to do Right to themſelves, and oblige the World; and, withall, they will do Me an Eſpecial Favour, (for which I ſhall not be Ungrateful,) in making me, by their Confutation, ſee a Truth I never knew before. This very Compendious Method, I ſay, will ſhorten Diſputes, avoid all ſhew of Wrangling, which is grateful to no Man; and, finally *conclude* the *whole Cauſe*. Or, if this does not pleaſe them; and, that it agrees not with their Genius to ſtand bringing *Evident Proofs*; then, let them but meerly *name*, or put down Categorically, *any one Principle* of theirs, which they judge to be the *Strongeſt*; and *moſt Evident*, of any they have; and, which they will vouch to be Influential upon the *Carteſian* Doctrine; and I will undertake to *Demonſtrate*, that either it is *no Principle*, or, that it has *no Force* to *prove* any Point of *their* Doctrine, nor has any Influence upon it at all. In caſe this Rational Propoſal (which, if both Parties do candidly ſeek Truth, ought rather to be call'd an *Overture of Peace*, than

than a *Challenge*) be as friendly *Accepted* as it is *meant*, it muſt needs draw upon us both the Eyes of all Learned Men who are *Lovers of Truth*, and are Weary of *Long Diſputes*; eſpecially, if they be concern'd to know whether the ſo much fam'd Philoſophy of *Carteſius* be *Solidly Principl'd*, or only *Extravagantly Witty*: And, their Expectation will be ſtrangely rais'd, to ſee what will be the Iſſue of a Controverſie thus cloſely manag'd; our Philoſophical Combat being, by this means, brought to the *Laſt Trial*, and a *Final Deciſion* by **Principles**, which are the *Arma Decretoria* or Truth. For, if it ſhall hap to appear that *Carteſius*'s Doctrine has not ſo much as *any One Principle*, which is *truly ſuch*, their Cauſe will be quite loſt, paſt hopes of Recovery: But, if it ſubſiſts by Principles, then I muſt make them Satisfaction, by acknowledging publickly, that I have fooliſhly over-ween'd, and take the Shame to my ſelf, for my Raſh Preſumption. We may confine our ſelves (as I ſaid) to half a Sheet of Paper: All ſhall be tranſacted by pure *Dint of Reaſon*; and, he that uſes the

leaſt Uncivil Word to his Adverſary, and falls into *Paſſion*, ſhall be held to have loſt his Cauſe, and to be reduc'd to a *Nonplus*. Every Man, acquainted with Humane Affairs, knows that, in ſome Caſes, [*Reſponſum non dictum*,] may be a ſufficient Plea to juſtifie one who is to vindicate his Chriſtian Credit, unjuſtly attack'd, without any Provocation given to his Oppoſer. It happens too, often times, that a Man cannot clear himſelf *fully* of thoſe Blemiſhes with which he is *aſpers'd*, but by laying them at the Door of the Injurious Affronter; whoſe Faults, if they be *Great* ones, cannot be ſo much as *Nam'd*, but the Words which expreſs them muſt needs *ſound harſhly*. Retorted Language, in ſuch a Caſe, is only the *Rebound* of the Aggreſſor's Violent Strokes, upon *Himſelf*; and are not *thrown at* him, but only *Reverberated* from an Object incapable to receive their Impreſſion. But, eſpecially, ſuch a Replier is excuſable, when he obſerves ſuch a Temper and Meaſure, that he imputes no *Impiety* or *Irreligion* to his Adverſary; but rather, charitably excuſes him from any ſuch high

high Crimes, even tho' he had cauſleſly, and uncharitably, imputed the ſame to *himſelf*; which (as I hope every Man will obſerve) is the diſtinguiſhing Character between Mr. *Le Grand*'s *Aggreſſive*, and my *Defenſive*. Notwithſtanding, however ſuch a Carriage againſt an Aſſaulter may, in Prudence, ſeem ſometimes unavoidable; yet, certainly, it is, *in it ſelf*, neither *Edifying* to good *Chriſtians*, *Inſtructive* to the *Learned*, nor *Profitable* to the *Readers*. Therefore, to avoid it for the future, and to clear *Truth*, which ought to be our only Care, I have thought fit to make this Faireſt and Civilleſt Overture. If it be accepted, neither Party, in caſe they do ſeek Truth, can be juſtly diſpleas'd. But if it be refus'd, and that my Oppoſers reſolve to purſue their former Rude Method, I ſhall hope that all *Wiſe* and *Good* Men will hold me *Excus'd*, (I dare ſay, your ſelf will,) if I decline the Ungrateful Task of *Reciprocating the Saw of Contention*; but let them ſtill wrangle on contentedly to *themſelves*, and apply my Thoughts to *better Things*.

55. It remains, Worthy Sir, that I beg your Pardon for Publiſhing this Paper, without acquainting you firſt with my Deſign. But, ſince you are not nam'd in it, it need not concern you in the leaſt, unleſs you pleaſe your ſelf. Beſides, I have diſcours'd with other *Carteſians*, of your Profeſſion, upon the ſame Subject; and, added, for their ſakes, ſome Paſſages, which, otherwiſe, had not needed: So that it cannot particularize you, in the leaſt. And, ſince this Paper has no other Tendency, but to clear *Truth*, I have reaſon to preſume, that your Candour would not have been diſpleas'd at it. I intreat you to do me that Juſtice in your Thoughts, as not to interpret this Addreſs, by way of *Letter*, to be a kind of *Challenge*, or Provocation. I am too well acquainted with the Study and Practiſe, in which you are ſo *Laudably* and *Succeſsfully* employ'd, to think it can allow you any Leaſure for an *Avocation* ſo Impertinent to your Proper and *Preciſe Buſineſs*. I hope my [*Ideæ Carteſianæ Expenſæ*] may give you Satisfaction in divers other Points.

Points. But, I must beſpeak your Pardon, while you peruſe it, for the many *Errata*. It happen'd, that the Compoſitor underſtood no Latin; and (beſides other Faults,) in two or three places, he hapt to put in what I had blotted out in amending my Copy; and, my Circumſtances were ſuch, that I could not always be in Town, to correct the Preſs. I am,

Honoured SIR,

Your Sincere Friend,

and Humble Servant,

J. S.

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